

ASPASIA

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THE FUTURE OF AMORALITY

BY

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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INTRODUCTION

By PROFESSOR J. C. FLUGEL

PSYCHO-ANALYSIS first began to attract the attention of a wider public by its pitiless revelation of the fact that men were less moral than their respectable and hypocritical codes would lead us to suspect. So alarming was the exposure that desperate methods of defence had to be resorted to in order to show, either that the evidence was false, or else that it applied only to a small minority of men. The former method was inimitably summarized by one of the greatest psychiatrists outside the movement in his suggestion that psycho-analysis should be considered merely in the light of a "*mauvaise plaisanterie*". The latter method has taken the form of saying that the psycho-analytic findings only hold good of certain classes of psycho-pathic individuals or else of the inhabitants of some particularly depraved region or city. As a means of escape from an unpleasant position this last

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suggestion looked pretty hopeless from the start, and its subsequent history has amply justified the somewhat contemptuous reply of the founder of psycho-analysis to the effect that it was "*ganz besonders unsinnig*". The idea that psycho-analytic findings do not apply to healthy-minded people has in the main fared little better, for further research has shown with ever-increasing clearness that the psychological difference between the normal and the abnormal individual (whether the latter be neurotic, psychotic, or criminal) lies much less in the presence or absence of certain immoral or highly unconventional desires than in their relative strength and in the ways with which the mind has dealt with them.

For something like a quarter of a century the world was scandalized by these discoveries of psycho-analysis, which indeed still retains something of the reputation of the bad boy of science, though, as in the case of other bad boys, its doings have been no less interesting on that account. Very gradually however, the fundamental lesson of psycho-analysis, that in the long run it is usually better to face unpleasant facts than to attempt to hush them up, is being learnt; with the result

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that, among the more enlightened, there is a tendency to recognize frankly much that was formerly concealed from others or hidden even from the self. As a remoter consequence, there has ensued a certain generally increased freedom of thought, expression, and behaviour. If this greater freedom is preserved—which is by no means certain (for the forces of repression are as insidious as they are strong)—it must in course of time profoundly influence our ethical standards, our moral and social codes of good behaviour, our educational and legal systems and many even of our most cherished political and religious institutions.

While the world at large has been trying to reconcile itself to the *immorality* of man, psycho-analysts have been engaged in further discoveries, dealing this time with the deeper psychological factors underlying human *morals*, or at least the human moral attitude. It was clear from the first that, granted the existence of strong and turbulent desires, the forces that were capable of quelling these desires, often to the point of transforming them beyond recognition or of making them unconscious, must themselves be very powerful. But their origin and nature remained (paradoxically

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enough, as it may seem) something of a mystery. It was only in 1923 with the appearance of Freud's little book *Das Ich und das Es* that light began to be thrown on this obscure field. It then became apparent that the growth of individual morality was to be traced largely to mental operations within the field of those very complexes which, when looked at from the point of view of instinct, had proved so horrifying.

This fact of the intimate connection of our morality with the Œdipus situation accounted for the fact that the bases of our morals are themselves unconscious, and therefore (as had already been proved), no less difficult to investigate than repressed material of an instinctive order. It scarcely prepared us however for the subsequent revelations concerning the severity of this unconscious part of our morality, its archaic and unadaptable nature and the serious consequences which this intransigence may bring in its train. For it soon became painfully clear that both individual health and social progress, under present-day conditions, require a sacrifice on the part of our morality as well as on the part of our more immediate desires. If

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these latter have to learn to respect the rights of others and to take account of the limitations inevitably imposed by the external world, our morals on their side have to abandon an insistence on outgrown or impossible ideals and to recognize that mere renunciation is as dangerous as it is fruitless and absurd. It has indeed to forego the joys of cruelty and punishment.

And this brings us to the heart of the matter. All archaic morality is *cruel* and as such in a sense enjoyable. For we have to admit that we enjoy cruelty; it is the most unsocial and devastating of our pleasures—whether it be directed against ourselves (in the way that psycho-analysis has shown) or against our fellow-men. Our thwarted instincts have allied themselves with our inhibitions and find expression in the savage joys of moral persecution. It is this fierce and persecuting morality which causes so many of our troubles, both in the individual mind and in the larger social organism. The most dreadful wars and massacres have always moral righteousness behind them—indeed without it they would be impossible.

Against such a morality, strengthened in its

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terrible severity by the lust of pain, some of the greatest moral teachers have protested in vain—perhaps because they have not realized, or have not succeeded in making clear to their followers, what were the conditions on which alone a more kindly morality of love and sympathy could be established. If the harsh and aggressive elements in morality that have done so much harm are to be softened or abolished, the causes of harshness and aggressiveness must be removed, or else some alternative outlet for these tendencies must be provided.

The latter method will probably always be necessary to some extent; the problem here is to find some channel which will be useful rather than harmful to our fellow-men. One such effective channel has been found in science, for the man of science—whether his science be “pure” or “applied”—has turned his aggressiveness against Nature, in a way that earlier generations of mankind (under the influence of morals, religion, or taboo) had not the courage to attempt.

But since it seems unlikely that all man's aggressiveness can be successfully sublimated in channels of this kind, the other and more

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drastic method of abolishing or reducing the sources of aggressiveness remains a problem of the first importance. Now, whether or not it be a complete account of the matter, there can be no doubt whatever that aggressiveness is a natural and inevitable reaction to frustration. This is a point on which I think the "two and seventy jarring sects" of present-day psychologists are all agreed; so that if we can reduce or abolish unnecessary frustration, we shall be rendering a great service to the true and purified morality of love, even though in so doing we are committing a grievous sin in the light of the older and more unconscious moral systems of taboo. It is in this way, if at all, that moral progress must continue. Some of the things that we want to do but which we now think wicked, will be found not to be wicked, but to be on the contrary healthy, useful, and desirable. In this way frustrations will be removed and sources of aggressiveness abolished.

At the present day some of the sternest and most uncompromising taboos, and therefore some of the fiercest aggression-breeding resentments, are those connected with sex. There have always been sexual taboos, though their

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nature has varied considerably from age to age. But the field of sex remains taboo-ridden to this day; it has been less illumined by the light of reason than any other field. We have remained singularly unwilling to ask whether or to what extent these taboos fulfilled useful purposes, still less whether they were productive of unsuspected evil. Psycho-analysis has shown us that the sublimation of sex has been instrumental in giving us many (perhaps indeed all) of the benefits of culture. But it has also shown that capacity for sublimation is limited, and that the attempt to sublimate more rapidly or widely than is psychologically possible is responsible for the neuroses of the individual and the corresponding diseases of the body politic. Here, therefore, if anywhere, we may reasonably look for causes of unnecessary frustration and of consequent aggressiveness. Psycho-analysts themselves have taken little trouble to discuss the ethical implications of their own discoveries; indeed, for this reason they have, in recent years, sometimes been looked upon as unprogressive by the more "advanced" reformers. In the present book Dr. Money-Kyrle for the first time systematically asks the question whether

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a relaxation of our sexual taboos is not the best, perhaps indeed the only, way of attaining a higher morality, in the sense of a greater general charitableness among human beings. The question is a bold one, for it strikes at the root of cherished prejudices. It is also a novel one, because it suggests a causal relationship (between sexual inhibition on the one hand and social and political unrest upon the other) that would formerly have been regarded as grotesque. But to the open minded the question will be all the more interesting and attractive for this very reason.

The situation of humanity at the present day is admittedly both tragic and ridiculous. With all the means of satisfying their needs to an extent that was formerly impossible, with the way at last opened to the general fulfilment of the higher ambitions that have hitherto been looked upon as utterly beyond the reach of more than a privileged few, men still persist in frittering away their energy in strifes and jealousies that would be petty and absurd if modern science had not made them so menacingly suicidal. A novel and desperate situation like the present, in which possibilities of unexampled progress are balanced against

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possibilities of unexampled horror and destruction, surely calls for the consideration of novel and (if we like to use the term) "desperate" remedies. Here is a remedy which is certainly novel, in the sense that it has as yet never been put forward seriously by any moralist, sociologist or politician; one that is "desperate", in the sense that it breaks with hitherto accepted traditions in the moral sphere; but nevertheless one that (like so many discoveries that have proved themselves of epoch-making importance) is amazing in its simplicity and scope; one moreover that has much scientific evidence behind it.

Other remedies for our present discontents have been tried and found wanting. With the tragi-comedy of human self-made misery in mind, let us throw aside our prepossessions, and give Dr. Money-Kyrle's proposal the serious and unprejudiced consideration which his courage and his enterprise deserve.

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IN former ages, when individuals suffered from afflictions of their bodies, they employed the local wizard to expel their demons. But, from the discovery of the purgative—which exorcised a more material devil—until the present day, medicine has steadily increased in effectiveness and rationality. Until recently, however, those suffering from afflictions of their minds were still unable to seek assistance, except from the professional exponent of some superstition. Indeed, Freud and Breuer, with their cathartic method, might claim to have performed, in the mental sphere, a service to humanity comparable to that of the unknown pioneer, who first separated gastronomic self-indulgence from its natural punishment.

In sociology, economists may be compared to the doctors of the body. But, for its mental troubles, society still tends to put its trust in quacks and charlatans. Even in the most prosperous states, there is much dis-

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content. According to the diagnosis of the complaint, the discontent is mobilized for various revolutions. Success is greeted with wild enthusiasm, as the dawn of a new era. But, if the diagnosis is wrong, joy gives place to disillusion, and disillusion to a fresh discontent.

If it were always argued that that which has failed in the past is not worth attempting in the future, there would be no progress. Cure is usually impossible without diagnosis. But after diagnosis, cure is often easy. Freud and the psycho-analysts have already begun to understand the social illness. Perhaps a further review of their work may suggest the remedy. Accordingly, I shall begin this essay with a survey of the psycho-analytic theory of social evolution. Then, turning to our own culture, I shall examine its defects, from the psycho-analytic standpoint, and try to diagnose their cause. Lastly, I shall endeavour to suggest a cure. But, since human destiny is determined by innumerable factors, some vital influence may well have been neglected. For this reason, much of my argument is necessarily speculative.

Perhaps I should add a word to explain the

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title of this book. Psycho-analysis has shown that depression and discontent are derivatives of hate. Therefore, a Utopia, in which happiness and contentment predominate must be a society based on universal love. This is a familiar description of the Golden Age of the past or future. But the great and learned or good and holy men who dreamed of such a condition of affairs thought of love more in the sense of Plato in his old age than of Eros in his youth. If their protestations may be taken more literally than they intended, a further contribution to their labours might be dedicated to Aspasia, the most celebrated of courtesans. Little is known of Aspasia, except that she was intelligent and much maligned. But, for the purpose of dedicating this essay, I will assume, regardless of historical exactitude, that she was amiable, and that, in short, a society composed of Aspasias, however promiscuous, would be more Utopian than one composed of Bishops, however pure.

It remains for me to record my indebtedness to those who have helped me in my work. Professor Flugel was kind enough to read the first draft of my manuscript and to make many valuable suggestions. These I have gladly

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adopted to the best of my power. But it would be unfair to hold him responsible for the errors that remain. My thanks are also due to Dr. John Rickman and to my wife, who have greatly helped me with their criticisms.

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OR

THE FUTURE OF AMORALITY

CHAPTER I

SOCIAL EVOLUTION

It may be humiliating but it is also apt to begin a study of human society by a visit to the Zoo. Dr. Zuckerman, in a paper read before the Psycho-Analytical Society,¹ described how the strongest male in a certain troop of baboons was very jealous and tried to keep all the females to himself. For the most part the others passively accepted his ascendancy. But, from time to time, there would be a challenge and a contest. If the challenger was defeated, which was usually the case, he did not fight

¹ His observations have since been published in his book *The Social Life of Monkeys and Apes*.

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to the death or even run away, like a decent animal of any of the lower orders. Instead, he presented his posterior, like any female member of the harem, and was promptly ridden by his victor. He would then remain docile until circumstances encouraged him to make a fresh attack.

Thus, among baboons, the young males have an ambivalent attitude towards their leader. He can be to them either a heterosexual rival or a homosexual object. The homosexual attraction is conducive to the stability of the group. But the heterosexual rivalry remains and, from time to time, disturbs its equilibrium. In human society the same ambivalence exists, though in a more refined and sublimated form. Thus the crude behaviour of Dr. Zuckerman's baboons may serve to illustrate the more complex mechanisms which have influenced the social evolution of mankind.

Families

The ancestors of man, like most other animals, were once subject to the periodicity of an oestrus and a rutting season. Like wolves and deer they probably split into families

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during the rutting season and collected into larger herds during the anæstrum. In this anæstral period we may find the Golden Age, the Utopia of the past, when man had not yet learnt to prey upon his kind. But even this periodic paradise was not to recur for ever. Man adopted an upright position, substituted the permanent sense of sight for the intermittent sense of smell as his erotic stimulus, and took to fighting over his female relations, most improperly, at all seasons of the year.

In the absence of any method of reconciling the young males with their leaders, the herd organization must have been impossible. Its place was probably taken by small families, each of which was liable to be terminated by an act of parricide, for there was no compensating love between sons and fathers. Thus social stability, with all the advantages it implies, was jeopardized by the extreme libidinosity of man. Each male desired all the women, all the time, for his private pleasure and enjoyment. The unstable organization of the primal family may have been the rule for countless generations. But co-operation is of immense advantage in competition.

Those families, which possessed any quality that enabled them to grow into larger units, must have tended to crowd out their more quarrelsome relations, until, at last, the choice between larger, more stable families and extinction must have been presented to our forefathers.

Two lines of development were possible—the fathers might become less jealous of their younger rivals, or the sons more tolerant of deprivation. The behaviour of Dr. Zuckerman's baboons suggests that the second of these alternatives was the one at first adopted. Those families in which a bisexual disposition best enabled the unmarried males to find some homosexual compensation were most likely to develop into powerful units. In this way evolution placed a premium upon homosexuality, or rather, the absence of this quality tended to bring about isolation and extinction.

Thus the capacity to obtain a mental and perhaps also a physical compensation for heterosexual abstinence permitted certain families to increase in size and to gain a military advantage over their less adaptable competitors. Freud, arguing not from general biological

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considerations but from the analysis of his patients, has come to this same conclusion.¹

It is obvious, however, that an over-development of male homosexuality would defeat its purpose, and that a variation which exhibited it too thoroughly would become extinct—not from a failure to co-operate but from a failure to reproduce. Perhaps for this reason, the type of man which survived the process of natural selection was nicely balanced between aggressive masculinity on the one hand and docile femininity on the other. Moreover, it was also necessary that the aggressiveness, which first evolved to master the resistance of the female and to capture and defend her from rivals, should remain as a defence of the clan against outside enemies.

It is this aggressiveness which is the real problem for the Utopian. Aggression is like an unruly army, which is maintained to defend the state, but which is always liable to turn against those whom it should protect. In the

¹ It is unlikely to be a mere coincidence that Sparta, the most efficient military state the world has ever seen, was also the most renowned for homosexuality, and that the Spartans were first defeated by the army of Epaminondas, whose main strength was a regiment composed exclusively of pairs of homosexual lovers.

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present condition of society, war itself should be no longer necessary, and the public interest requires the substitution of general disarmament for adequate military preparedness. It would be best if aggressiveness, except in its sublimated forms, could disappear. But the unruly army still remains to threaten revolution, if it is not employed in war.

There is still far more aggressiveness than is safe for any society or for its neighbours. But far less is manifest than in the days of primeval man, or even in medieval times. This is because part of the conflict has become intrapsychical. In primeval man, as in the child, aggression was *prohibited* by parental authority. In modern man it is *inhibited* by a precipitate of this authority, named the conscience or super-ego. And when aggression is inhibited and unconscious, it is liable to be inverted against the self. In extreme cases the resulting depression leads to suicide, that is, the murder of the self. But more often the inverted aggression fuses with an inverted sexuality to form some neurotic symptom or masochistic perversion. Sometimes the masochism may be projected and enjoyed by proxy. In this way is formed the refined sadist, whose sadism

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is not merely the expression of hate, but of a pleasure in the vicarious enjoyment of pain. Only extreme cases of these perversions are apparent to the ordinary observer, but the psycho-analyst has no difficulty in detecting them, in a disguised form, in all the habits and institutions of mankind.

Thus whenever sentimentalists rejoice at some apparent evidence of greater humanity, analysts usually discover a concealed hate to take the place of that which has seemingly disappeared. For this reason, there is now, explicit or implicit in their writings, a new law of nature, which, on the analogy of the law of the indestructibility of energy, might be called the law of the indestructibility of hate. Freud, at all events, seems to be pessimistic. He believes, if I understand him correctly, that there is a fixed quantity of aggressiveness in human nature which can never be diminished. Some small part of it may be sublimated into industry and science. But the rest will remain, a permanent menace to society.

Dislike of pessimism is no ground for the rejection of Freud's view. But certain biological considerations suggest that a greater optimism may, after all, be justified. The

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offensive weapons of the males of many species appear to have been first evolved to master the resistance of the females, before they were adapted to sexual combats, self-defence, and the pursuit of game.¹ If so, instinct probably followed the same order of development as structure; and aggressiveness, beginning as a by-product of male sexual ardour, may have been progressively adapted to serve the ends of jealousy, defence, and economics. From such considerations it seems to follow that aggressiveness is the servant of other instincts—especially that of sex—rather than an independent impulse. If so, it probably occurs only when such instincts are frustrated.

If this argument is correct, the prospects for the Utopian become at once more rosy. He is not confined to the recommendation of sublimations which he has no power of inducing anyone to adopt. He may hope to discover how to decrease frustration and thereby reduce the total aggressiveness of mankind.

Societies

The psycho-analyst has bestowed a new and deeper meaning upon the dictum that history

¹ Hense-Dofflein, quoted in Roheim, *Animism*, p. 250.

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repeats itself. To him the history of human society has been an endless repetition on an ever grander and more complex scale of the history of the primeval family. The intense jealousy of the old man, the frustration of the sons and their consequent hatred of their father, their partial sexual inversion towards him and the diminution of their hate, the recurrence of this hate, its transference to other groups or its inhibition and inversion towards themselves, their masochism, and finally their sadism, in which the original hate once more finds an external object—these are the old themes which recur throughout our culture. Human history is thus largely the history of the precarious control of human hate, of its partial disappearance, transference, and inversion, and of its constant return. From time to time it breaks all bounds. Just as the sons of a primeval family must from time to time have slain their father, so every subsequent community from time to time destroys its government. But after the revolution follows disillusion. The primeval brothers could not all be fathers. The revolutionaries could not all occupy the place of those who excited their envy. And even those who did occupy it found that it brought

them no lasting satisfaction, for what they had gained was only a symbol of what they still unconsciously desired.

The primitive human family, we have suggested, was probably organized like Dr. Zuckerman's troop of baboons. It differed from the primal family in that it contained several adult males. But only the leader functioned sexually. The rest were abstinent, and derived a partial satisfaction for their deprivation in homosexuality, and a partial outlet for the aggression which arose from the frustration of the rest of their heterosexual impulses, in war and hunting. Such a bi-sexual family was larger and stronger than the primal family but it was still limited to the descendants of one male. Any arrangement which would permit its further growth into a clan containing several families would be an obvious advantage.

The growth from the bi-sexual family to the primitive clan can only have been made possible by a decrease in the jealousy of the leading male. At first he prevented his sons from possessing any women in his presence. Later he must have allowed them to enjoy the women they captured, only preventing their interference with those who were already his. The general

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sex taboo gave place to the more limited incest taboo. But we must suppose that such prohibitions still applied only to the younger generation. Sisters were taboo to brothers because the father tried to keep all the daughters for himself. The taboo on daughters must have belonged to a later age.

So far we have distinguished three stages; the primal family, containing one adult male; the bi-sexual family, containing one functional and several homosexual males; and the primitive clan, containing one incestuous leader and several exogamous males. These stages are the missing links of social evolution. No direct record of them remains. They may be inaccurate in many details. But, in their main features, they are plausible deductions from the known psychology of man.

The most primitive organizations, we know, are already far removed even from the latest of those we have constructed. In the savage communities of the present day, there are no exceptions to the incest taboo; psychologically, every member is a son. The father, who is free from the incest taboo he imposed on others, is no longer real. But his power has been increased rather than diminished by his demise,

for he has become the totem ancestor, who lives on in the minds of his descendants.

Freud and his disciples have attempted to envisage the origins of totemism and their results are in the main convincing. In a primitive family or clan the sons must have found it difficult to realize that the father they had loved, feared, hated, and perhaps killed at last, was really dead. They would see his ghost in nightmares, or imagine it in some animal which lingered about his grave. They would respect his wives, at least for a time, or they would avoid temptation by sending them to join him in the spirit world. They would also call upon him to assist them in battle. Yet from time to time the old unconscious hate would break through again and they would kill him once more in a solemn sacrifice. Only after the sacrifice, when the fact of his death had penetrated even to their unconscious minds, and perhaps when they had incorporated his spirit with his supposed body in a sacrificial meal, were they free, for a time at least, from the incest taboo. Then there would be general licence and much rejoicing. But soon the old superstition would return; the father would be reincarnated in a new totem, and the tribe

would fearfully avoid all those things which he had forbidden. They would be very moral until the next sacrificial orgy.

Although totemism may have originated in some such way as this, it is not at once obvious why it should have survived so many generations. Some writers appear to suppose that the grandsons inherited the memories of the sons and so retained their attitude to the totem father.¹ But there is at present no biological justification for accepting, so easily, a belief in the inheritance of acquired characters. It is much more plausible to suppose that the grandsons found in the totem a ready-made symbol, on to which to transfer their infantile relations to their own fathers, than that they had inherited a memory.

We may dispute about the origin and maintenance of totemism. But it is at least certain that the totem, or its anthropomorphic equivalent, the ancestral ghost, is the guardian of primitive morality in the tribe, as is the father in the family. He it is who instigates the puberty rights, which symbolize, among other things, castration and death—the punishments for neglect of the taboos on incest and parri-

¹ This, at least, follows from their Lamarckian views.

cide, or endogamy, and the murder of kinsmen.

Among civilized agnostics, conscience may take the place of ancestral ghosts. But among primitive people, it is difficult to believe that there would be any taboos without superstitions. Perhaps even the agnostic's conscience is only an immaterialized totem, the product, in the last analysis, of an unconscious superstition.

In the primitive clan which we reconstructed, the incest taboo was limited to daughters. The younger generation of both sexes stayed at home; the sons living with captured wives and the daughters remaining as concubines of their father. But it is otherwise in the primitive societies of the present day or of direct history, where the absolute ruler and father of the clan has been replaced by his ancestral ghost, who admits no exceptions to the incest taboo. Such a community can be exogamous in one of two ways. If the sons leave the family to marry, the daughters remain and import their husbands. The children belong to their mother's totem and the system is matriarchal. If, on the other hand, the daughters leave the family, the sons remain and import their wives. The

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children belong to their father's totem, and the system is patriarchal. It is difficult to say which of these two systems is the older. But the matriarchal organization appears to be more successful in avoiding jealousy and conflict between sons and fathers.

Both systems facilitated the combination of many clans into one tribe. For they enabled the former wife-raiding expeditions to be replaced by peaceful barter. Therefore, they formed important steps in social evolution. If the ancestral totem of the clan had permitted fathers to wed their daughters, the fathers would scarcely have tolerated their daughter's marriage to outsiders without a struggle. Thus one condition for the progress from clans to tribes appears to have been the jealousy of ghosts. Indeed Natural Selection, which favours the biggest battalions, must have set a premium on those who were most strict. This, at least, should be remembered to the credit of the gods, when the modern anthropologist summons them before him to account for their misdeeds.

The development of inter-clan marriage, within a tribe, may have tended to decrease frustration, aggressiveness, and civil war. But,

if so, the greater equality between the numbers of each sex, which is to men one of the disadvantages of peace, and the consequent approximation to monogamy, must have provided a fresh source of frustration. At all events, enough aggressiveness remained to find an outlet in inter-tribal war.

From the beginning of totemism onwards, the ambivalent feelings, which must once have been consciously directed to fathers, began to be transferred more and more to other real or imaginary objects. The totemic tribe developed, by conquest, into the theocratic state. At the head of such a community stood the father god and mother goddess (perhaps once totems of the ruling house), surrounded by satellites of lesser divinity,¹ served by a priesthood, loved, and feared by all. To these figures were transferred those complex feelings, some conscious some unconscious, which had been originally directed by primeval families in the remote past and by the present worshippers in their childhood, to their earthly parents. Like the primitive father of the bi-sexual family, the god of the theocratic state was jealous. He forbade incest to others, though he was incest-

¹ These were probably the former totems of subject tribes.

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tuous himself.¹ Moreover, through his priesthood, he often exercised the *jus primae noctis*. Facilities were provided for the sacrifice of virginity at his temple. Like the primitive father, he led his people in battle, and thereby offered an outlet for the aggression which was unconsciously directed towards himself. Like the primitive father, he was loved as a partial substitute for the incestuous objects, of which the unconsciousnesses of his followers were deprived. The homosexual attachment to him was sometimes conscious, if we may suppose that, when his priests were eunuchs in feminine attire, they were pretending to be numbered among his wives. Like the primitive father, he was the object of an unconscious hate which could not always be wholly transferred or stilled. In his periodic sacrifice, the hatred of his worshippers, although latent in thought, was manifest in deed. But if the fear and love were too great to admit this outlet for unconscious hate, it inverted against the worshippers, who chose one of their own number to die instead. In the slaughter of the incarnate son god, they enjoyed, masochistically or sadis-

¹ The God Amon is called the husband of his mother Neith.

tically, in their own persons or by proxy, their inverted sexual and aggressive lusts.

In such ways as these the god of a theocratic state secured great social stability for his people. He diverted to himself some of the hatred which would otherwise have been directed against real fathers or father substitutes. He decreased it by providing a partial homosexual substitute for the incestuous deprivations which were its ultimate cause. Of what was left, part he diverted to foreign enemies, part he permitted to be satisfied in his own sacrifice, or caused to be inverted upon his worshippers, so that they sacrificed themselves. Lastly, and in this he was unlike the primitive father, he permitted his divine consorts, in the persons of his priestesses, to sleep with any stranger at the temple. In this way, we may suppose, a great part of the unconscious incestuous desires of the people were symbolically gratified, and the prime cause of aggression partially removed. The theocratic state was sometimes destroyed by external enemies, or split asunder by rival priesthoods, but, as long as the god was a living force, it appears to have been singularly free from plebeian revolution.

The King of Babylon was the high priest of

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the reigning deity, but the Egyptian Pharaoh was himself the god. In both empires the ruler was celestial, but in Egypt he was also human. The Babylonian system was theocratic, for the King was only the nominal ruler. The Egyptian system was truly autocratic, for all power, secular and ecclesiastical, was in the hands of one man. Perhaps, in both countries, power was once divided between a high priest and an incarnate god who was periodically slain in a sacrificial rite. If so, it was probably the high priest in Babylon, and the incarnate god in Egypt, who finally succeeded in concentrating it in his sole hands.

The conscious and unconscious emotional relations between the sovereign and the people were similar in both systems. The divine Pharaoh led them in war. In early times he was also sacrificed by them. But later such rites became merely symbolic. The Sed festival which once celebrated the death of the pharaoh and the transference of his spirit to his successor came to celebrate only his rejuvenation.

The empire of the pharaohs like every empire, was always in danger from external foes. From these even its isolated position could not entirely protect it. Internally, how-

ever, it would probably have been absolutely stable if it had been monotheistic. Unfortunately it had been built up from many petty states, each worshipping its own gods. These gods, with their local priesthoods, were a permanent danger to the central authority, and from time to time they shattered it.

Whether from natural piety, or from policy, or from a mixture of the two, Aknaton attempted to substitute, for Egyptian polytheism, a monotheism which centred all legal and religious authority in his own person. He failed, and Egypt never wholly recovered from the shock. Modern sympathizers have been much affected by his tragedy—though perhaps less because of his idealism than on account of the extreme beauty of his wife.

Roman autocracy was a debased imitation of the Egyptian, imported after the defeat of Cleopatra. Julius Cæsar must have already envisaged its possibilities, and the idea was steadily cultivated by his successors, who were influenced by policy as well as vanity. But the divine Emperors of Rome had reckoned without the destructive influence of Greek Philosophy. They were divine in name only, and the people, who could no longer believe

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in anthropomorphic gods, fell a ready victim to the imported religion of the Galilean. If they could have destroyed Greek scepticism they would have had nothing to fear from Christianity. Instead, they wasted their time in burning Christians, while they permitted the philosophers to undermine the yet cruder superstitions on which their own power was so largely founded.

Cæsar was still a father symbol. But he was no longer a god. Thus most of the forces which protected the divine rulers of more ancient autocracies from the unconscious hatred of their people, were gone. The life of the average Cæsar was excessively precarious. He rose as the leader of a popular revolt against his predecessor, and was, in his turn, usually destroyed by his successor. He climbed to power through promises which he was probably unable to fulfil, and was often dispossessed by the first demagogue who made promises yet more extravagant. In this way the resources of the state were exhausted and the Roman empire delivered over, an easy victim, to barbarians.

The short and dangerous existence of a Cæsar must have resembled that of a primal

father. The fate of all absolute rulers, who are inadequately supported by superstition, is likely to be the same.

Out of the chaos of the dark ages a new form of theocracy developed. The King no longer pretended to be divine. But he asserted that he ruled by divine right, and the power of the Church was so strong that he was usually believed. At this period the people were provided with several father symbols, among whom to distribute their ambivalent affections. Most of the hate was reserved for the Devil; the fear and love were distributed between the King, the Pope, and God.

Perhaps it was again Greek philosophy which was ultimately responsible for the decay of this comparatively stable condition of affairs. Philosophy was rediscovered after the crusades and again after the fall of Constantinople. Gradually it undermined the power of the Church. The Church became sceptical of its own superstition, and weak against the factions which had always threatened it. Under cover of a religious revival the doctrine of freedom of conscience gradually permeated the secular mind, even in Roman Catholic countries, and was accepted by the Churches of Protestant States.

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This doctrine is destroying the new religion no less surely than it destroyed the old.

The puritans of England would admit no intermediary between God and man. First the Catholic Pope and then the English bishops lost their influence. It was inevitable that the King by divine right should also lose his magic power. Thereafter, his first act which symbolized something to excite the latent hatred of his people, especially if it provided a real grievance, was certain to cause his fall. Charles I was a victim of this process.

Only in a limited monarchy, when the King is relieved from real power, can a dynasty, which is neither divine nor divinely appointed, hope to survive. In the English monarchy, inaugurated by the second revolution, the King, as Dr. Eder ¹ has pointed out, remains a symbol to attract the unconscious love of the people, while the Prime Minister, who is the victim of a periodic bloodless revolution, is the symbol which periodically evokes their hate.

The most complete development of the divinity of kings was to be found in Egypt, and the most complete development of their

¹ *Social Aspects of Psycho-Analysis*, edited by Ernest Jones, 189.

divine right, in France. But, even in France, the Roman Church was losing power. The superstitions, on which Louis XIV sought to perpetuate his dynasty, were wearing thin. No absolute monarch, however benevolent and wise, could hope to withstand the onslaught of such men as Voltaire and Rousseau. The people had fewer grievances under Louis XVI than under his solar ancestor, but they had lost the superstitions which had formerly inhibited their hate from finding, only too surely, its natural symbol. The attempt to make Louis XVI a limited monarch, on the English pattern, was too late to have much hope of success. The result was the democracy of the French Republic.

Autocracies do not always break up into democracies. More often, perhaps, they develop into oligarchies. In Norman England the power of the King was not limited in the interests of the people. It was usurped by the barons. But the barons quarrelled among themselves, as is the custom of oligarchs, and the monarchy was restored, in a yet stronger form, under the firm hand of the Tudors. Probably, as we have seen, it was more the decline in the superstitious belief in divine

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right than the ineptitude of the Stuarts, which once more destroyed its power. After two revolutions and some minor upheavals the monarch remained as a symbol to attract the loyalty of his people, while the authority and the unpopularity were largely transferred to Parliament. But Parliament was at first oligarchic rather than democratic. The franchise was severely limited and subject to bribery and coercion.

Under this system the people had yet more father symbols among whom to distribute their complex feelings. Besides God and the Devil (who were still both believed in, though with less intensity) and the King (who was still revered, though less deeply) there were the chief minister and the various notabilities who disputed his power.

Under Queen Victoria the prestige of the monarchy once more increased—a fact which must have been as much due to her sex as to her longevity and common sense. It can be no coincidence that the two most stable rulers in English history were women. For the greater part of the nineteenth century there were a God and a Prime Minister to attract the conscious and unconscious feelings which children

first direct towards their fathers. But to the head of the state could only be directed the far less ambivalent emotions, which children develop for their mothers. Possibly the position of the Queen would have been less unchallenged if the franchise had been, at that time, extended to women. Doubtless she would have been horrified at the suggestion. A sure intuition would have warned her of the possibility of danger.

But in the meantime, like the medieval barons, the Whig and Tory oligarchs were quarrelling among themselves. Each side sought new allies in the voteless multitude. The passions of the common people were artificially inflamed against one or other party and the franchise was continually extended. It was usually the Whigs who first agitated for more votes, and the Tories who stole their thunder and won the kudos for the fresh concession. Both Disraeli and Mr. Baldwin obtained the credit for an extension of the franchise which they knew must otherwise have fallen to their opponents.

Such actions may have served their immediate purpose; and, in any case, it was impossible to prevent others from performing them. But

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it is difficult to foretell whether their ultimate consequences will be harmless or disastrous. For the first time in history there is a complete democracy. Moreover, science is rapidly destroying the influence of superstition on the units that compose it. With the waning of religion the law has lost much of its celestial support. And which is perhaps even more important, the Devil is no longer a symbol to hate. His place has been taken by an abstraction called the Capitalist.

In our democracy, political fathers are extinct, at least theoretically; for all men are equal at the polling booth. But the economic father, the capitalist, still remains, and, since his employees no longer know him personally, there is no reason why they should not imagine him to be as black as they like. Perhaps his fate will be the same as that of the primal father, with the difference that, in England, he is more likely to perish by votes than stones. If so, his place may be taken by a state bureaucracy, which will be likely to inherit unpopularity as well as power. For a time, perhaps, the bureaucracy will be deified—the Russians at least appear to have succeeded in this feat—and the aggressiveness of the people

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diverted into a holy crusade. But I can see no reason why the Chief Bureaucrat of the future should be more secure than a Cæsar of Rome. For both are autocrats and neither a god. And the Œdipus complex remains.

Summary

The ambivalent relation between children and parents, in the family, has been endlessly repeated in society, between the people and their divine, political, and economic rulers. No social system which is not founded on superstition is likely to endure, unless the unconscious causes of revolution are first removed.

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL DISCONTENT

So far we have considered, in general, the Œdipus complex in social evolution. We will now examine, in greater detail, some of its effects in our own culture. These may be treated under three heads: unrest, depression, and material discomfort.

Unrest

We have already argued, in Chapter I, that the Œdipus complex has been responsible for many of the revolutions of the past, and we have interpreted these as repetitions, on a larger scale, of the rutting battles of a primeval herd. We have seen how the unconscious parricidal tendencies of individuals tend to be directed against their social leaders; how these leaders were once deified, first as totems, then as gods; how the divine king was sacrificed by proxy, and the king by divine right protected

by the superstitions of his people; and how, in the modern world, the capitalist has inherited their unpopularity without their supernatural power.

The conscious purpose of the earliest revolt was sexual; the primeval brothers killed their father in order to secure his wives. In historic times, the sexual motive was replaced by a political aim; the revolutionaries envied the sovereignty of their ruler. But, in our own day, the object of unrest is largely economic. Thus, in the course of social evolution, the conscious aim of discontent has shifted from the sexual to the economic sphere.

There are two ways of interpreting this change. We may suppose either that the instincts of man have really changed, or merely that they are more repressed. We may suppose that modern man is indeed less sexual than his ancestors, and that the will to power, which, in the early history of the race, was simply the will to secure females, is now divorced from its former sexual aim. Or, we may suppose that his sexual rivalry is still as strong as ever in his unconscious, and that his economic rivalries are the distorted expression of his repressed erotic drives.

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There is perhaps some truth in both these explanations. If the offensive weapons of the males of many species were first evolved to master the resistance of the female, and were then progressively adapted for sexual rivalry, self-defence, and the pursuit of food; and, if instincts develop in the same order as the structures which they use, it seems probable that, in these species, aggressiveness was first evolved in the service of the sexual impulse, and that it was afterwards adapted to other ends. A similar displacement of aggression from the sexual field may, therefore, well have occurred in the racial, as in the social evolution of mankind.

But the results of psycho-analysis lead us to attribute a greater weight to the other explanation. According to this view, social evolution is relatively independent of racial change, and the more archaic sexual motive still lurks beneath the economic rivalries of man.

At this point, perhaps, if not before, the impartial critic will feel that the psychoanalysts are clearly off the rails. He will compare our economic conflicts with the battles which even well fed dogs wage over each other's bones, and regard them as obvious sublimations

of the nutritional rather than the sexual impulse. We shall see that this argument is right in what it affirms, and wrong in what it denies.

The experience of weaning is now known to be often a severe shock to the child. Throughout his life he may retain an unconscious fear of a similar deprivation, or an unconscious desire to find himself once more an infant, with all his nutritional needs delightfully satisfied without any effort of his own. The fear of poverty and the desire to be supported by a parent state can be traced, in part, to such unconscious feelings. Thus some of our economic anxieties and aspirations may be regarded, quite correctly, as derivatives of the nutritional impulse.

It is more surprising to learn that many economic interests are also derived from impulses which satisfy the needs of the other end of the alimentary canal. But the researches of Ferenczi, Ernest Jones, and Roheim, to mention only some authorities, leave no doubt that this is indeed true. Thus, for example, the pleasure which the young child derives from the idea of playing with his fæces often continues in his unconscious, and is displaced in consciousness first to mud pies, then to sand castles, and finally to money.

The unconscious permanence of such oral and anal interests of infancy is partly due to the fact that they are so much disturbed. If weaning were longer delayed and cleanliness not the sole virtue of the nursery, they would be more easily outgrown. But the main cause of their persistence is the Œdipus complex.

Most animals indulge in sexual play long before the maturity of their sexual organs and children are no exception to this rule. Whereas the little boy takes a sexual interest in his nurse, his sisters, and especially his mother, the little girl shows a marked erotic preference for her brothers and her father. But, in Europe and America, the cruder expressions of such impulses are discouraged, so that they are relegated to the unconscious, whence they emerge again, in a more distorted form, at the time of puberty. The repression and frustration of these early desires have two results; they evoke a large amount of unconscious hate not only against the sexual rivals but also against the persons who have rejected the child's love, and, what is more important for our immediate purpose, they cause a regression of erotic interest to the activities of infancy. Thus, the oral and anal impulses which have been already fixed in the

unconscious by the means adopted for their discouragement, are still further strengthened by the check to the development of normal sexuality. They may remain dissociated from consciousness but they are expressed symbolically.

The result of regression to a given level of development is not the same as the result of fixation at this level. Regression carries with it many of the characters of the higher stage, which had been temporarily reached. Thus the pre-genital (i.e. oral and anal) interests of the child, in the latency period,¹ differ from those of the infant, who has not yet reached it; for they include characters of the repressed Œdipus complex. The content is pre-genital, but the form is Œdipean. While the infant merely resents interference with his oral and anal sublimations, the child, who has regressed to the same interests, is also jealous of the similar desires of others. The infant seeks what it wants; the child wants what others have. In both cases the object may be an oral or anal symbol, but the child's attitude to

¹ The latency period is the period between the Œdipus complex and puberty in which the sexual impulse appears to be dormant. It is inconspicuous among savages who suffer much less than Europeans from repression.

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it is typically Œdipean. He has experienced rivalry in love and he is over-ready to anticipate and resent the same situation in other spheres. He values presents not only because of their symbolic meaning and intrinsic merit, but also because they are evidences of love; and for this reason he is over-ready to be envious of his rival's toys.

An appreciation of the presence of these Œdipean factors in pre-genital regression is necessary to an understanding of economic unrest. We have seen that many of the economic interests of Western Europe result from unconscious oral and anal impulses which have survived from infancy. But what is important is that the typical attitude of the European to property is Œdipean as well as pre-genital. His desire for it is excited not only by its symbolic meaning and real utility, but also by the mere fact of its possession by others.

The luxuries of one age become the necessities of the next. The labourer of to-day is as comfortable, and therefore as rich, as the medieval baron. He is certainly much richer than the medieval serf. But he is not more contented, because his relative poverty is as

great or greater. It is this which disturbs his Œdipus complex and excites his aggression against the capitalist. To his unconscious, the capitalist is not only the wicked father, but also the brother who has stolen his parent's love.¹ And, for both these reasons, he resents inequalities of wealth.

In so far as the aim of socialism is uniformity rather than efficiency, it is the result of unconscious motives such as these. But, because man has the capacity to identify himself with others, or at least to understand their point of view, a dislike of inequality is common in those who sympathize with the unfortunate, and in those who fear to excite the envy of their fellows, as well as in those who are envious themselves. The former wish to raise the poor to the level of the rich; the latter nurture the more modest hope of reducing the rich to the level of the poor.

¹ The unconscious does not like to think that the parent intended to give something to a rival, so that, it prefers, like Jacob, to believe that the gift is in reality a theft. Thus, Lord Snowden's passionate assertion that God gave the land to the people, and not to the dukes, vindicates the impartial intentions of the Divine Parent (which are not always obvious) and attributes the unequal distribution of His gifts to the malice of mankind.

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It is, however, doubtful whether even complete impartiality by the parent state, and the abolition of all other parent figures, would alone suffice to remove the unconscious causes of unrest. Each child, in his secret heart, desires to be the sole recipient of the outward symbols of parental love. Often he prefers to be punished rather than to be treated with mere impartiality. Western Civilization contains many such grown-up children. Even if differences of talent and administrative position could be eliminated, as well as differences of wealth, each would still wish to be the superior rather than the equal of his fellows. As long as the unconscious dream of so many people is to be the only son of a widow, there can be little hope of contentment in the larger family of the state. Therefore social unrest is unlikely to decline, until the unconscious causes of economic envy have been reduced. And these are to be found, as we have seen, in the infantile fixations and regressions which cluster round the Oedipus complex.

Depression

We have seen that the frustration of any fundamental impulse evokes aggression, but

that, if the frustrating agent is also loved, the hate is displaced to some other object. Thus, in particular, we have attributed economic unrest to the displacement of hate from fathers or brothers, and other early sexual rivals, to the economic leaders of society. There is, however, a special case of the displacement of this emotion, which we have not yet considered. The hate, instead of finding some other external object, may be inverted against the self.

Imagine the child faced with the difficulty of hating some person whom he loves. So long as there is frustration, the hate remains; but it cannot find its natural aim. At first, perhaps, it is displaced to some other external object. Thus the child may bully his brother because he will not admit that he hates his father. But if he learns to love the other members of his family, a fresh difficulty arises. Since he can neither get rid of the hate altogether, nor find an appropriate object for it, he disowns it and attributes it to someone else. Thus, for example, he may say in his unconscious: "This hate does not belong to me; it belongs to my mother. I don't hate my father because he is my rival; my mother hates him because

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she prefers me." For a time, the child may comfort himself with this pleasing delusion. But, sooner or later, the evil day comes when he can no longer conceal from himself the awful truth that his parents love each other. It is at this moment, I think, that the hate inverts against himself. He says in his unconscious: "My father hates me because of my incestuous desires." But, if the father is kind to the child, the concept of the jealous and vindictive father is separated from the real person, and feared as an immaterial being.¹ Perhaps the child develops a phobia of some monstrous animal, which he expects, every evening, to find beneath his bed. Perhaps he learns the fear of God, and dreads, each night, to be awakened by the crack of doom. Or perhaps he is only haunted by a dim and hostile presence who observes and notes his sins.

At first, we might suppose that such conditions must be rare. But when we remember that the sense of guilt or the inner voice of

¹ From this it may be inferred that an increase of kindness by parents, if unaccompanied by a decrease in the frustration of the really fundamental sexual impulses of the child, might lead to more rather than to less neurosis. See Flugel, article on Psycho-Analysis in *An Outline of Modern Knowledge*.

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conscience is an example of them, we begin to understand that they are almost universal. Now a conscience, once it is acquired, is difficult to lose. The conscientious child, as he grows older, may come to see that his early sense of guilt had no rational foundation and was often opposed to common sense. In time he may think that he has outgrown it and that his intelligence is the master of his fate. But a closer inspection will show him that it has merely changed its form. For in the melancholy and depression which sometimes afflicts him he will be able to recognize his old enemy once more.

That part of the conscience which is forgotten and repressed is called the super-ego. Even this unconscious conscience is not, of course, a wholly evil thing. It may force its possessor to prodigies of work in order to justify his being, and it is then at least useful to his friends. But civilization suffers from too much conscience rather than from too little. Psycho-analysis has shown, for instance, that many crimes result from an excessive sense of guilt, which compels its victims to take the shortest road to prison; and many of the other activities of conscience are almost equally mis-

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placed. But we are here concerned only with its responsibility for depression.

Everyone has heard of those melancholics, who feel that they are hated by both God and man. Few people realize, however, that a milder form of the same malady is almost universal. The citizens of our culture do not give the impression of great peace of mind. They do not like to be alone. They crowd in cities, in cinemas, in factories, and on football fields. They must be occupied in active work, or in collective play. For if their minds were not filled with external things they would at once become depressed. This is also the reason why successful business men, after gaining the ambition of their lives, so often find in retirement neurosis rather than repose.

There is an intimate relation between depression and unrest. Both are largely due to unconscious hate; though, while in the former the hate is inverted, in the latter, it is merely displaced. Moreover, the two conditions are interchangeable to some extent. Just as among asylum patients, phases of melancholy and mania succeed each other, so in the larger asylum of the world, depressed individuals sometimes lose their sadness when they can

find an active cause of discontent, and become again depressed, when the discontent is over.

Material Discomfort

There is a considerable difference between the attitude of most current sociology and the view so far adopted in this essay; for, while most sociologists attribute our social ills to the economic system, we have reduced them to the Œdipus complex. Indeed, the impartial critic will probably reflect that we have been equally onesided in stressing unconscious motives for unrest and depression, when economic distress is evident to all. In trying to correct this balance, we may at once admit that happiness and contentment are by no means independent of material prosperity. But we shall discover that similar unconscious factors are among the conditions which have prolonged the existence of real poverty in an age which possesses the technical capacity to remove it.

Economists agree in attributing the present industrial depression to the combined influence of war debts (including reparations), tariffs, and trade union regulations. War debts necessitate the transference of vast quantities of goods or gold from one country to another.

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If creditor countries had been content to close their factories, employ their workers on roads, and accept payment in commodities, the debts might have been settled without undue disturbance. Instead of this, however, they protected their industries by tariffs from the competition of their debtors, who were in consequence compelled to pay their debts in gold. Eighty per cent of the world's supply of this metal was stowed in vaults in Paris and New York.¹ Money became scarce and prices fell; for general prices vary inversely as the ratio between the bulk of transactions to be made and the amount of money available with which to make them.

A fall in prices is not necessarily an unmitigated evil if production costs can be correspondingly reduced. If money wages could have fallen with the cost of living, most factories could have carried on without reducing the real purchasing power of their employees. But the trade unions resisted this readjustment so that prices fell below costs and industry after industry closed down.

¹ If the creditor countries had used their reserves to finance foreign loans, the trouble would have been only postponed—tariffs would have prevented repayment, except in gold.

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Thus, these three factors—war debts, tariffs, and trade union regulations—seem to have been severally necessary and collectively sufficient conditions for the greatest industrial depression the world has ever seen. The economic argument is simple. Yet an immense discomfort has been inflicted upon the world by a general inability to comprehend it. To psychology belongs the task of discovering the reason for such phenomenal stupidity.

There is a conspicuous difference between the business relations of individuals and those of nations or of classes. While normal individuals can usually approach their economic problems calmly, groups are often influenced by a degree of hatred and suspicion which is inimical to the settlement of any difficulty upon its merits. Indeed, these emotions are often so intense that their parallel can be found only among asylum patients.

One of the commonest forms of mental aberration is paranoia, that dangerous insanity in which the sufferer erroneously believes himself to be persecuted by his fellows. Freud has shown that the main predisposing condition for this disease is an inverted Œdipus complex. Such a complex is common in both

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sexes, but for simplicity we will consider it in boys. Its development may be roughly divided into six stages. In the first, the little boy loves his mother. In the second, he becomes consciously or unconsciously aware of a rivalry with his father, and hates him accordingly. In the third, he learns to love his father and to experience a conflict between love and hate. In the fourth, the hate is repressed, disowned, and attributed to the father. The child says in his unconscious: "It is not I who hate my father; it is my father who hates me because of my thoughts about my mother." Then the child fears his father, that is, he fears his own inverted hate. This fear is, as we have seen, the sense of guilt. In the fifth stage, the child represses and projects his erotic incestuous desires because of his fear and guilt. He says in his unconscious: "It is not I who have indecent desires towards my mother. It is my father who has them." Finally, the child may pass to the sixth stage, in which he identifies himself with his mother, and inverts, towards himself, the erotic impulses he has projected upon his father. He says in his unconscious: "I and my mother are one. My father loves me." Now the beliefs and

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national paranoia was responsible for the costly delay in settling war debts and reparations. But the emotional disturbance of international thought is even more evident behind the tariffs which aggravated the condition. For the same nations which insisted most loudly on being paid, were also the most definite in their refusal to be paid in goods. There may be rational arguments for debts and reparations by themselves, or for protection by itself. But only national paranoia can account for the combination of the two.

National paranoia may explain, in general, why nations prefer their passions to their economic interests. But in order to understand the particular forms taken by such passions it is necessary to plunge yet deeper into the analysis of unconscious motives. A desire to castrate the father, and an intense dread of the paternal phallus, are regular constituents of the Œdipus complexes of individuals and constant themes in mythology and folklore. When, therefore, a nationalist combines a desire for the last farthing of reparations with a fear of receiving them in the form of dumped commodities, we may suspect that he is not uninfluenced by his own castration

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complex. There is no space here to elaborate this argument in detail. But when we remember that Abyssinian warriors, like some other barbaric people, castrate their vanquished foes, it may seem less fantastic to attribute some of the reparation mania, at least, to a similar though more sublimated desire.

When the minds of governments are incapable of clarity, those of trade unions can hardly be expected to be less clouded. The unions were asked to accept wage reductions by employers,¹ ruined by the falling prices which international gold payments caused. They naturally suspected a fresh plot of the capitalist to defraud them. They usually refused and thus precipitated the collapse of the industry by which they lived. In this way, class paranoia completed the work of destruction which national paranoia had begun.

Class paranoia is not only among the causes of the present industrial depression; it is also a chronic impediment to progress. Industrial individualism may be wasteful; but a purely destructive attack upon capitalism is even more injurious. The capitalist, of all animals,

¹ Employers' associations also are sometimes over-suspicious in their dealings with their workmen.

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is the most international and the most ready to migrate. Moreover, he is timid and suspicious, so that he quickly moves his person and his possessions from countries where he is molested. Hasty threats of nationalization paralyse the industries concerned, for they stimulate the flight of capital to more reactionary lands. The same effect is produced by budgets which seek, too rapidly, to increase the equality of wealth. Not only the funds to be utilized in social services as a supplement to wages but also a portion of the wages themselves, tend to disappear. Therefore, if the capitalist is not encouraged, at least until he can be dispensed with, only a bankrupt industry will remain to distribute among a starving people. The Œdipus complexes of some socialists, however, have led them to neglect such considerations, and thus to injure the cause which they espouse. Only when the partisans of the rival systems have lost their paranoiac suspicions of each other can there be any hope of a compromise which combines the merits and avoids the disadvantages of both.

So far we have argued that group paranoia, by impeding the settlement of national and international economic problems solely on their

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merits, has done much to increase material discomfort. But the standard of living does not only depend upon the production and distribution of commodities; it also depends upon the number of people among whom they are to be distributed. We will, therefore, now investigate the economic effects and the psychological causes of the opposition to eugenic birth control.

Until the industrial revolution, there was no great change in the life of the common people. They lived almost as they had lived since the Neolithic Age, untouched by the material progress of their masters. Life had always been precarious and hard. Nevertheless, there was much pleasure to be derived from love-making, dancing, drinking, and the various festivals which are always conspicuous in small communities and, above all, from a not uninteresting toil. Then came machines, the destruction of craftsmanship, and relatively high wages in the factories. It might have been expected, as indeed most of the earlier economists foretold, that the workers would become richer and therefore happier.

Neither of these prophecies was fulfilled. A slight increase in wealth was no compensation

for the loss of village life. And the higher wages which should have followed an ever-increasing competitive demand for labour were checked by an ever-increasing supply. The population of England, which had been stationary for many centuries, quadrupled itself in one. Thus the growth of so-called national prosperity did not greatly increase the standard of living of the people ; it merely increased their numbers. Malthus observed this fact. But his reasoning, which would have been understood by any savage community, was ignored on both religious and social grounds. The population continued to increase, and lost the greatest opportunity to secure its material well-being that has ever been presented.¹

Although national fecundity impeded a rise in the standard of living, some improvement did actually occur, for the expansion of trade was at first even more rapid than the growth of population. The nation, as opposed to the individuals that composed it, thrived by selling

¹ It is difficult to determine the exact optimum of population at any stage of industrial development. But there is no doubt that the standard of living would have been higher if the growth of the population had been less rapid.

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manufactured goods in exchange for food. But a shrewd observer could hardly have hoped that the industrial expansion would go on for ever. He would have anticipated that our foreign and colonial customers would develop industrial populations of their own, and so make what they formerly bought and consume what they formerly sold. In short, he would have feared that we should find it increasingly difficult to sell and increasingly difficult to buy, and that either our numbers or our standard of living would eventually decline. With these arguments before our fathers, they might have been expected to take some steps to forestall a crisis. Having largely failed to secure a rise in the standard of the workers, they might, at least, have sought to prevent a fall. They might, for instance, have endeavoured to disseminate a knowledge of the means of contraception. Instead of this, however, they did what they could to impede the work of those, like Bradlaugh, who were more far-sighted than themselves.

The development of manufacturing communities, within the agricultural countries on whom our trade depends, has already begun. And part of our industrial decline is surely due

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fertile. If nothing is done to counteract these dangers the end is certain. The fall in the standard of living of the people, due primarily to their failure to adjust their numbers to their markets, will be accelerated by their increasing imbecility until they are destroyed by civil war or famine.

The remedy is simple. A knowledge of birth control could be made accessible to the most ignorant members of the nation, and the alternative between sterilization and incarceration could be offered to those defectives who are too feeble minded to profit by this knowledge.

So far, however, these remedies have been almost totally neglected. For a long time eugenists had urged, in vain, that information on birth control should be accessible in maternity centres under municipal control in order that it might reach that section of the community which is most prolific and most tainted with congenital defects. But when at last the

prolific than other people "of low cultural level or of low economic status." The report, however, does not appear to throw doubt upon the statement that *those stocks from which the mentally defective are mainly recruited* are more prolific than the untainted portion of the community.

SOCIAL DISCONTENT

hoped-for permission was granted in 1931, it contained restrictions calculated to make it as far as possible eugenically useless.¹ In the words of the official memorandum, the information can only be given "to cases where further pregnancy would be detrimental to health". Thus able-bodied defectives, however prolific, are still protected from this knowledge. Moreover, a further provision withholds advice on contraception from all who are not already mothers, unless they are married women, suffering from a gynæcological complaint, in whom pregnancy would be detrimental to health. Even less progress has been made in the eugenic attempt to legalize the voluntary sterilization of the mentally defective. A bill with this object was recently rejected by a large majority in a comparatively empty house. The eugenic remedies are obvious. The penalty for neglecting them is severe. Therefore, only pathology can account for the opposition which they have met.

The famous castration complex is next in importance to the Œdipus complex, of which, indeed, it forms a part. The fear of

¹ Public opinion, rather than the Ministry of Health, should be blamed for these restrictions.

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tion is chronic in the unconscious, and many symbolic situations are interpreted by it as threats. In the Middle Ages such anxieties were almost consciously expressed in the dread of magic, for the main function of magic was to cause, or cure, sterility and impotence. In modern times these fears are less conscious, but they are still active, even if they are more repressed. To them, therefore, we may not unreasonably ascribe some part of the opposition to birth control and especially to sterilization. In this country, however, the main cause appears to be a prudish attitude to sex.

All forms of birth control were at first opposed by organized religion, which is often slow to welcome innovations likely to benefit mankind. But organized religion, at least in this country, is losing confidence, and now speaks with an uncertain voice. At one time, organized labour seemed likely to inherit the obscurantism of the faith it is supplanting. For many socialists, encouraged by the tactlessness of some eugenisists, seemed to think that contraception was a capitalist attack upon the wage earners. But soon, others no less ardently maintained that the opposition to birth control was a capitalist conspiracy to increase

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the number of wage slaves. Both beliefs are paranoiac; but, since they cancel out each other, their effects may be ignored. Therefore, neither organized religion nor organized labour, as such, can be held responsible for the main opposition to eugenic birth control. There remains, however, a mass of puritan obstruction which can no longer be identified with any one specific creed.

The extreme puritan appears to feel that every pleasure is a sin, unless it is the unavoidable accompaniment of the means to some good purpose.¹ He therefore maintains, quite logically, that copulation is an unjustifiable indulgence, except when there is an intention to beget. This is still the official attitude of the Roman Catholic Church. The puritan, moreover, however admirable in private life, is unable to keep his virtues to himself. He therefore does his best to deprive those who are unable or unwilling to exercise restraint from its necessary

¹ Modern Epicureans have suggested that a tube in the oesophagus would permit them to repeat indefinitely the joys of swallowing, without indigestion. Modern ascetics might adapt this idea to a different purpose—namely, in order that they may be replenished, without the joys of swallowing.

alternatives—sterilization or birth control. He also infects others with his own prudery, so that they too are ranged, actively or passively, on the side of obscurantism rather than of progress.

Extreme puritans are comparatively rare. But, like all noisy and self-righteous groups, they are a terror to M.P.'s. Moreover, they are almost unopposed. For the majority, who secretly dissent from their opinion, have acquired, from puritanical surroundings, a nasty attitude to sex and therefore avoid all open discussion of the subject. They were thus enabled to defeat the bill for the voluntary sterilization of the feeble minded, and to prevent the Ministry of Health, "having regard to the acute division of public opinion on the subject", from authorizing contraceptive information, in public clinics, except in "cases where further pregnancy would be detrimental to health".

Now the puritan is not only a danger to the future of the race; he is also the victim of a serious disease. Like the paranoiac, he has suffered in his youth from the repressions of the Œdipus complex. Indeed there is a close analogy between the two. Both have pro-

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jected their repressed desires. But, whereas the paranoiac sees mainly his own hate in other people directed towards himself, the puritan imagines that he detects in others the licentiousness which he has disowned. Sometimes his projected erotic impulses are inverted towards himself. Thus, he may fume at the shamelessness of modern women, because he unconsciously desires to be seduced. More often perhaps, his disowned desires are still directed to other external objects.¹ He then satisfies them vicariously in the persons of those who excite his unconscious envy and his conscious disapproval. He enjoys by proxy what he has been denied. But he persecutes the innocent causes of his secret pleasure because they are at once objects of envy and expressions of his own repressed desires. He takes a morbid interest in the vices of his neighbours and is ever ready to imagine vice where none exists. For this reason it has been said that, to the pure, all things are impure.

We have already seen that the extreme puritan is the main enemy of progress, through eugenic birth control. In the next chapter we will argue that he is also one of the aggravating

¹ i.e. he imputes to B his own lust for A.

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causes of the complex of which he is himself the victim.

Summary

The Œdipus complex, and its ramifications, is not only directly responsible for much of the unrest and depression of the present time. It is also a cause of many of those national and social animosities which impede the economist in his attempt to alleviate the immediate industrial depression, and of those prejudices and fears which obstruct the eugenist in his effort to secure a real prosperity for mankind. It is, therefore, both a direct and an indirect cause of social discontent.

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL DIAGNOSIS

LIKE the conjuror, who with a too monotonous persistence produces the same egg from the most unlikely places, the psycho-analytical anthropologist is accustomed to see his Œdipean egg greeted with more boredom than amusement. But this is not all; he is often accused of laying it himself. Should such be our fate, we can protest our innocence, but we cannot study sociology without repeatedly discovering the egg. We have already considered, in general terms, its influence on social evolution; and we have discussed, in greater detail, some of its effects in our own culture. We will now try to diagnose its cause.

Those philosophers who are concerned with the origins of things, were once wont to ponder deeply, if to no purpose, the problem of whether the hen preceded the egg, or the egg the hen. The same problem concerns us here in dealing

with the Œdipean egg. For, like other eggs, it develops into a hen, who reproduces. In other words, the effects of the Œdipus complex, to some extent, include its cause.

This vicious circle is most evident in its simple archaic form. The trouble did not start with Œdipus, but with Laius, who feared his infant son and caused him to be exposed. Thus the primeval father's jealousy was mainly responsible for the parricidal inclinations of his sons. But even the primeval father was once a son and he almost certainly acquired a great part of his jealous disposition during the period of abstinence which his own father inflicted upon him. For having learnt to hate and fear his father, he readily transferred these emotions to his sons. Thus jealousy involves frustration; frustration, hate; hate, anxiety; and anxiety gives rise to jealousy. We may start anywhere on the circumference of the vicious circle, and trace a causal sequence which returns to the same point.

In the modern world, the same vicious circle still operates, but its mechanism is more obscure. The emotions which compose it have become unconscious, and are concealed beneath slightly different feelings. Thus the

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hate may be veiled by discontent, the anxiety by depression, and the jealousy by morals.

Although the earliest form of moral prohibition was clearly due to the jealousy of the primeval sire, the cause of present-day morality is far more obscure. It is, however, obvious that the effect of sexual morals on the development of the modern child, is likely to be similar to that of paternal jealousy on primeval sons. For both produce the same kind of sexual deprivation. We have seen that puritan morality is one of the effects of the Œdipus complex. We shall now see that it is also among its aggravating causes. But in order to understand this fully we must study the general influence of frustration upon the development of mind.

The universe of science, unlike the God of superstition, cares nothing for the sufferings of man. It yields neither to sacrifice nor prayer. We may fight it in the laboratory and workshop. We may wrest some pleasures from its unwilling fingers. We may even prolong the lives of those we care for. But our victories are precarious and short. In the end, death separates all lovers. There is thus much suffering that cannot be avoided. But the

deprivations, which afflict us from the cradle to the grave are not all due to the inclemency of nature. The greater number result from the behaviour of our fellows. It is with the far-reaching effects of some of these that we are here concerned.

Such deprivations begin early in life. While the infant's physical needs are recognized and catered for, most of his psychological requirements are misunderstood or ignored. Yet the emotional experience of feeding is as important as the actual nourishment received. Severe disappointments at the breast not only establish the unconscious permanence of oral desires which would otherwise have been largely outgrown but also evoke an ambivalent attitude towards the mother, which may persist throughout life towards all subsequent love objects.

Most infants suck their thumbs as a partial compensation for the breasts which they are unable to control, or which they have lost for ever. Adults are usually intolerant of this habit, partly because it disgusts them and partly because they do not want the infant to spoil the shape of his teeth. Perhaps it can be gently discouraged without harm. But if it is firmly forbidden, the oral deprivation which

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the infant has already suffered, will be increased, and, with it, the strength of his infantile oral desires and his resentment against those who frustrated them.

The human infant may be sick at the sight of food which has caused him indigestion. But he shows no trace of innate disgust or cleanliness. His attitude to his excreta is the exact opposite of that of his elders. He neither ignores them nor treats them as objects of loathing but welcomes them as valued play-things. As soon as the nurse or mother realizes that the infant's dirtiness is not accidental but deliberate, her own disgust is actively excited. She then proceeds to secure the permanence of the impulses she dislikes by repressing them before they are outgrown. Their subsequent unconscious strength is proportional to the degree of intolerance with which they were originally discouraged. Moreover, the infant's ambivalence towards the prototype of his later love objects is further increased. Thus the early establishment of what Ferenczi calls "sphincter morality," although convenient in the nursery, is often injurious to the child.

At a very early age infants usually discover

their external genital organs and derive much pleasure from the sensations which these yield. But such amusements are discouraged, so that, like the oral and anal impulses, they become fixed in the unconscious, and with them a still deeper resentment against authority. This is the first result of the contact between sexual morals and the child.

Thus the various frustrations to which infants are subjected for their supposed good by their mothers and nurses, have two far-reaching effects, namely pre-genital fixations¹ and ambivalence towards subsequent love objects.

Whereas the infant is mainly interested in parts of the human body (such as his mother's breasts, his own buttocks and penis together with their respective products), the child comprehends and cares for a whole person. Thus the passage from infancy to childhood is characterized by the appearance of personal love. These early loves of children are even more selfish and intense than those of their elders and they are treated with even less consideration. The child's attitude towards his

¹ Infantile masturbation precedes the discovery or acceptance of the vagina and is therefore said to belong to the "phallic", not to the "genital", stage of development.

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mother is like that of the monogamist towards his wife. He regards her as his own possession and is indignant when he is required to share her. But, unlike the monandrist, he is snubbed or punished for exhibiting his jealousy.¹ From such experiences he derives a lasting conviction of the faithlessness of women and the injustice of the world. Moreover, although he may repress his hatred of his father and his brothers, this will remain in his unconscious to sully his relation with those who will later take their place.

A great part of the budding sexual life of the child takes the form of curiosity. But here again he is likely to meet with a gratuitous rebuff. He is made to feel that his questions are unwelcome, and he retires into himself, crestfallen and snubbed. Imagination, however, soon comes to the aid of thwarted curiosity. Probably he has already discovered that pleasurable sensations can be derived from masturbation, and now, under the influence of weird fantasies, he is more than ever likely to take seriously to this solitary pursuit. His apparent precocity is discovered and horrifies

¹ Imagine the consternation which would follow the adoption of a similar attitude by judges to petitioners for divorce.

his parents or his nurse. He is badly frightened by the lecture he receives and either relegates the desire for masturbation to his unconscious, where it is a potent cause of trouble, or continues the practice with fear in secret.

If the child is not isolated but brought up with playmates of the same age, he is almost certain to invent some form of sexual play, which, in turn, is usually discovered and suppressed. With this final deprivation the pre-pubertal stage of sexual development is closed. The cumulative effect of many prohibitions is an internal inhibition which represses the expression of conscious desire. The parental morality is accepted by the ego, and the early forms of sexual expression are relegated to the unconscious. But whereas conscious impulses can be modified by trial and error, impulses which have become unconscious can no longer be outgrown. Therefore the final product of such a moral education, however normal he may seem, carries within him the dissociated and unfinished impulses of the infant and the child. The disappointments of later life are apt to reactivate these forgotten yearnings, which, in so far as they are satisfied,

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may give rise to neurotic symptoms or perversions, and, in so far as they are frustrated, to depression and discontent.¹

With the end of the latency period and the onset of puberty, the sexual development begins again. But the early repressions are usually sufficient to prevent it from becoming normal. Indeed, the boy is fortunate if his impulses are merely homosexual, and have not suffered a still more serious distortion. The object of a homosexual impulse is another human being. But in solitary masturbation, which is its usual alternative, there is no love relation, and other perversions are still further removed from normality and still more difficult to outgrow.

Thus even without the morality of schoolmasters, the infantile repressions are sufficient to produce many neuroses and unsatisfying perversions. But the moral attitude of educational authorities enormously facilitates their task. For moral intolerance is directly proportional to the normality of the impulse it condemns. A grotesque and solitary perversion is greeted with amused contempt. Onanism is more seriously condemned but it is

¹ Sublimations also occur, but we are here concerned with the less desirable effects of repression.

usually regarded as inevitable, and discouraged merely by a lecture or a beating. Homosexuality is considered a grave crime and its discovery is often followed by expulsion. But the schoolmaster's whole armoury of punishments contains nothing adequate for a normal love affair with a member of the other sex. It is easy to sympathize with the educational authority who measures sexual crime by the extent of the repercussions it involves. But the fact remains that the scale of values which he considers necessary for the common good is in direct opposition to that which is in the interests of the individual. And, after all, the community consists of individuals.

There is a story of a man who, being afflicted with a double chin, employed a masseur to remove it. The superfluous tissue seemed to melt away before the skilled fingers of the expert; the client paid his bill and went away delighted. But his pleasure was short lived. For when he observed himself in the double mirror at home, he discovered that the fat had merely been replaced; the treble neck which he had acquired was even more conspicuous than the double chin he had suffered so much to lose.

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There is naturally a moral to this story. The sexual impulse can be distorted but it cannot be destroyed. The influence of the home and the school can prevent the development of normal sexuality; but it cannot prevent some sexuality from developing. Checked again in its natural growth, the impulse reactivates the unconscious desires of infancy and childhood. These can be symbolically expressed in various perversions and neurotic symptoms. But in so far as they are completely frustrated, they give rise to depression and discontent. Adolescents of both sexes are often unhappy or dissatisfied for reasons which they are themselves unable to express. They do not know what they want, because their dearest wishes are unconscious. Moreover, many of these desires are unsatisfiable, not only because they are repressed, but also because they are infantile. They continue to exist because they were not allowed to be outgrown.

It is remarkable that the capacity to perform and enjoy the act of reproduction so often survives the intolerance of early environment. But even though it does survive, it is usually much mutilated in the process. Depression

after love-making is so common that it is often supposed to be natural and inevitable—*omne animal post coitum triste*—yet such a reaction is typically neurotic. Few of those even who can enjoy the act, have escaped with an unimpaired capacity for love. For many individuals, coitus is not far removed from masturbation. If it were not for this common indifference to the mental response of the sexual object, prostitutes would find few clients. The same indifference on the part of men is responsible for much of the frigidity of women. Many husbands do not desire to excite, and are therefore incapable of arousing, the ardour of their wives.

Possibly the sexual development of girls is less easily injured by prolonged deprivation than that of boys. It has been estimated, indeed, that about one-third of the adult female population of these islands is wholly or partly frigid, and therefore neurotic, discontented, or depressed. But a great deal of this frigidity may be due to the clumsiness of husbands whose own sexual development has been impeded. At all events, quite normal feelings often do develop in women after marriage even when these have been kept dormant until then.

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Nevertheless, in many women, the effects of the moral impediments which so consistently obstruct the growth of healthy and satisfying instincts are not so easily removed.

Between adolescence and marriage yet further obstacles to normal sexual growth are placed by the intolerance of public morals. Most men are unable to marry early, for economic reasons. Sometimes they succeed in forming a series of satisfactory but temporary unions. Often, however, they are so intimidated by the prevailing morals of their age that they waste their best years with prostitutes or in masturbation. By such means they are rendered still less capable of efficient love, so that, when at last they marry, they fail to secure happiness, either for themselves, or their wives, or even their children.

The existence of the average unmarried woman can hardly be more enviable. It is true that those who marry do so earlier than men, so that their period of solitude is shorter. But few unmarried men are always chaste, whereas the majority of unmarried women probably remain in this condition. They may be less conscious of their sexual needs than men but they often suffer no less surely from the

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vague depression and discontent which is inseparable from frustration. They are sometimes prudish and disagreeable, because they envy unconsciously those who seem to enjoy what they are denied.

The taboo on pre-marital unchastity, moreover, is often responsible for hasty and unhappy marriage. Everyone is a romanticist, consciously or unconsciously, for everyone desires to rediscover, in his marriage, the perfect relation which once bound him to his mother. In both sexes, this is a general rule, though girls transfer their love very early to their fathers, and, thenceforth, if they are normal, reserve the largest share of it for men. Therefore everyone is at heart a monogamist, who desires to find an earthly paradise in the love of one other individual. Prevailing morality pays lip service to this aspiration. But it demands the letter rather than the spirit, and is thus an enemy of the institution it purports to support.

Consider the conditions of a perfect union, in order to discover why it is so seldom attained. Both partners are symbols of the primary objects of each other's love. But this is not all. The mother, although she was the first

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person to be loved, was also the first person to frustrate. (Most children, as we have seen, resent being weaned and never quite forgive this deprivation. Fathers, also, seldom if ever, completely satisfy their daughter's first hopes.) For this reason, the same individual, who is a symbol of the first love object, is also likely to symbolize the first object of indignation. The mutual symbolization of real fathers and mothers is therefore an insufficient condition for a perfect marriage. It is further necessary that each partner should symbolize the ideal parent who never frustrates (i.e. the parent before weaning and perhaps even before birth). Minimum frustration requires maximum harmony. The reactions of both partners to the external world should correspond, and their reactions to each other should be complementary. Thus, their sublimated interests should correspond rather than conflict. Their ideas on art and politics, if they feel strongly about these things, should be the same. It is still more important that their unsublimated impulses should be complementary. Sexual impulses are not uniform. Partly because they have been so much distorted by repression, they are as varied as any other appetite or

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interest. Therefore a given degree and type of sadism in one partner requires a complementary degree and type of masochism in the other. And the same holds for exhibitionism and voyeurism, and for all the other components of the sexual impulse.

To generalize these requirements precisely, it is necessary to distinguish between direct and inverted wishes. The exciting feeling known as desire can be associated with the idea either of the self doing something to someone else, or of someone else doing it to the self. In the former case the desire is said to be direct; in the latter, it is said to be inverted. A mathematician would then express the requirements of an ideal marriage as follows: The necessary and sufficient condition to sexual harmony is that to every direct or inverted impulse in one partner there corresponds an inverted or direct impulse (of the same degree and form) in the other, and conversely. Connubial, as distinct from sexual, harmony requires in addition, as we have already seen, that the sublimated impulses should also harmonize or correspond.

It will be seen from the complexity of these conditions that candidates for a satisfying union must know each other well before they can

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rationally venture to make their partnership irrevocable. It might be thought that no sane person would hope to find a permanent companion, without some trial and error. But conventional morality, which is fairly tolerant to concubinage or prostitution, is inexorable in its condemnation of experimental unions. One can sympathize with conventional morality in its attempt to protect the innocent young woman from childbirth and desertion, but one must inquire whether it does not inflict more suffering than it prevents. For people whose judgment is distorted by unsatisfied desire are incapable of forming a true opinion of each other.

Morality not only tends to force people into marriage without previous knowledge of each other; it also forbids them to escape from the consequences of an injudicious choice. If public morals were more tolerant of pre-marital incontinence, post-marital unchastity would probably be less. For people would only marry when they wanted children and knew each other well, and not merely for sexual experiences which they could enjoy without this ceremony. Then the moral attitude to divorce or infidelity would inflict less suffering. As it

but so is greed. Yet greed is largely outgrown, while jealousy increases. Imagine a people kept for a great portion of their lives in a state of semi-starvation, and at length only permitted to eat their fill on condition that they each chose some one dish which they were not previously allowed to taste, but which should henceforth be reserved for them as their sole sustenance for ever. The prevailing vice of such a people would certainly be greed. For they would be excessively envious of each other's food, or excessively jealous of their own. Those who were not engaged in stealing scraps from someone else's cupboard, would be occupied in savagely defending their own hoard, even if they did not want it all. The parallel between sexuality and hunger may not be exact. But it is near enough to enable us to realize the effect of moral intolerance upon the development of jealousy. People who have suffered much deprivation are over-ready to anticipate and fear it. The moral standards of Western Europe are so arranged that they secure the maximum deprivation from the cradle to the grave. This gives rise, as we have seen, to internal inhibitions and a curtailed capacity for love. And, as Ernest Jones

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has shown, it is just those people who are the most inhibited who are also the most jealous. They seek to prevent their legal partners from relieving elsewhere the desires which they are unwilling or unable to satisfy themselves.

The moral and legal attitude to perversions may seem less important than that to normal forms of extra-marital indulgence. Dispassionate people now admit that it inflicts unnecessary suffering upon abnormal individuals. Moreover, the persecution of these unfortunates seems additionally gratuitous when we remember that they often owe their peculiarities to the impediments which intolerant morality has itself strewn in the path of normal sexual growth. For, as Marais and Zuckerman have shown, even apes can be perverted by abstinence. But when all this is said, the number of people who are injuriously affected appears to be relatively small. Further research, however, throws doubt on this comforting reflection. Active perverts may be infrequent, but unconscious perverts are a wholesale product of the prevailing morals of the age. It is debatable whether perversion is necessarily an evil. Some homosexual impulses in men, as in baboons, may be necessary

to social solidarity, and even sadism is probably preferable to aggressiveness which is not eroticized. But there is no doubt that an unconscious perversion is more dangerous to society than one which is repressed.

Unconscious homosexuality, for example, is one condition of paranoia. We have discussed, in Chapter II, some of the political and economic consequences of paranoiac suspicions, so that we may here content ourselves by pointing out that a great deal of jealousy is of a paranoiac type. In normal jealousy the rival is the main object of hate. But the hate which is chiefly directed towards the unfaithful partner is often the result of an unconscious homosexual attraction for the rival.¹

Next to homosexuality among perversions, sadism is perhaps regarded with the most disfavour. So great, indeed, is the official terror lest we should all be converted to the practice of this perversion, that a general order bans all films which display scenes of cruelty. Nevertheless, producers, novelists, and play-

¹ Nothing less vindictive than such a hate could prevent collusion between couples seeking for divorce. But collusion is illegal, so that only those petitioners who are paranoiac are smiled on by the law.

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wrights know that nothing is more popular, and, by introducing the sadism as a foil for the heroic qualities of the hero, they contrive to satisfy their public without exciting the attention of the law. Sadism, like homosexuality, is largely a by-product of the morality which consistently impedes the development of more normal sexual interests. (It is the especial vice of the ascetic, as the history of the Church has shown.) But morality, as usual, regards its own offspring with disgust and endeavours to suppress what it has itself produced. Here again its influence is probably injurious, for the unconscious sadist, like the unconscious homosexual is perhaps a greater danger to society than the more honest pervert. The conscious sadist usually confines his attentions to some masochist to whom they are entirely welcome. The unconscious sadist, however, discovers, in the persecution of those with whom he is unable to agree, a moral justification for the enjoyment of his repressed desires. The use of anæsthetics was at first resisted on the ground that God intended the sick to suffer pain. Even now some pious individuals would like to withhold them from women in childbirth because the sorrow of labour is the divine

punishment for the sin of Eve.¹ And those who, for moral reasons, resist contraception and abortion, contemplate with equanimity, if not with positive approval, the vast misery of the slums.²

The remoter consequences of moral tyranny can be followed up and shown to be often no less injurious. The direct deprivations inflicted by it are obvious enough. But the indirect consequences are more important and less easy to detect. Instinctive drives can be distorted; they cannot be destroyed. When the sex-instinct is thwarted in any stage of its development it remains fixed at, or regresses to, some earlier, more infantile impulse and seeks new outlets from there. Each disappointment in life adds to the probability of regression or to the strength of the fixations which have been already formed. Thus the unconscious pre-genital and incestuous impulses which are established by the frustrations of infancy and

¹ The former slackness in combating venereal disease may also have been due to the fact that it was regarded as a punishment for sin.

² Sadistic social workers perhaps retaliate by wishing that such sadistic puritans could be first reduced to extreme poverty and then compelled to bear one child a year.

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childhood are confirmed or reactivated by those which subsequently occur. Some frustration, either by nature or the hand of man, is of course inevitable. But as we have seen, the greater amount is inflicted, almost gratuitously, by the sexual morals of our age. These morals are, therefore, very largely responsible for the strength of those unconscious pre-genital and incestuous impulses which make up the Œdipus complex.

In the last chapter we considered some of the direct and indirect effects of this complex upon our culture. In this we have tried to diagnose its cause. If our arguments were correct, social discontent is due, firstly, to the Œdipus complex, and ultimately, to those sexual frustrations which create and maintain it. Some of these are naturally inevitable. But many of them seem to result solely from a misunderstanding of the remote effects of morals.

Summary

A child will always desire to monopolize his favourite parent and he will always be jealous of his rivals. Therefore (at least until foetuses are incubated in bottles) the

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Œdipus complex is unescapable. But its initial severity and the probability of fixation and regression are much increased by European morals.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL THERAPY

IN Chapter II we argued that social discontent is among the direct and indirect effects of the Œdipus complex, and in Chapter III that the severity of this complex is largely due to the intolerance of sexual morals. Therefore, if these arguments are correct, sexual morals must be largely responsible for social discontent. Now, when the diagnosis of any disease is complete, it can often be cured or prevented, and this should be as true of social maladies as of those which afflict individuals. In this chapter, we shall study the social therapy which is suggested by the foregoing diagnosis of social discontent.

In the early history of medicine the many examples of the cure of empirical remedies before science made it possible to strike at disease. In mental trouble

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empirical cures sometimes achieved the most astonishing results. Unfortunately, however, they required a naïveté which is no longer common. Thus hysteria used to be cured by rites of exorcism. But sufferers from hysteria who have ceased to believe in possession, can only be treated by the more lengthy method of psycho-analysis. Similarly, in the days of faith, religion was a natural cure for social discontent. The true believer was indifferent to the disappointments of this life because his unconscious incestuous impulses were satisfied by the love of a God who united in His own person the paternal and maternal qualities of omnipotence and tenderness.¹ Now, however, God is more abstract and less personal, even to those who still believe in Him, for anthropology and physics are shattering the foundations of crude beliefs. Therefore religion is losing its potency as a cure for social discontent and, unless something more scien-

¹ In so far as the emotional compensations of religion depend upon the unconscious satisfaction of homosexual impulses, they may be regarded as a sublimated form of the crude homosexual compensations for heterosexual abstinence enjoyed by Dr. Zuckerman's baboons. See Chapter I.

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tific is adopted to take its place, the prospect for society is bleak.

Theoretically, psycho-analysis could remove the social trouble more efficiently than religion ever did. But the process is much longer and more expensive. Whereas the success of a conversion is only limited by the education and intelligence of the devotee, that of analysis is limited by many factors, including the generosity of the patient's banker. Formerly, whole crowds could be made happy and contented in the love of God by one sermon from a passionate fanatic. Now, single individuals can only hope for an inward peace after years of labour with a highly trained physician. Therefore the decline of faith is increasing the number of neurotic and discontented persons far more quickly than psycho-analysis, or any other method of psycho-therapy, can hope to cure them. But, even if this were not so, prevention would still be preferable to cure, and, since wholesale cure is impracticable, it is the more desirable to see what can be done by prevention.

If the deprivations inflicted by morality are among the conditions of social discontent, greater moral tolerance should make for stability and happiness. But it is idle to paint in

glowing colours the benefits which humanity might be expected to derive from greater tolerance unless it can be shown that such tolerance is not impossible to man.

The earliest prohibitions were doubtless imposed by jealousy alone, unrationalized by any religious or sociological beliefs. Thus the primeval father, like the leader of a troop of baboons, imposed abstinence upon his sons, for his own physical convenience, rather than for the spiritual welfare of their souls.

But the primeval father became first a totem, then a god, and finally a super-ego. In his name, people began to impose morality upon themselves, and this added new motives to the morality they imposed upon each other. They did not cease to desire, consciously or unconsciously, what they were forbidden, and they therefore envied those who were freer than themselves. In this way the scope of moral intolerance became wider. A moral intolerance determined by jealousy affects only the small circle of people whom the moralist himself desires. But the moral intolerance which is determined by envy has no limits, and is directed against all those who have more freedom than the moralist's own conscience allows.

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Moreover, since the jealousy and envy are usually themselves repressed, the actions which they excite are imputed to an altruistic desire to further God's will or the highest interests of society.

Ever since Thrasymachus there have been thinkers who have perceived the true foundations of morality; and, ever since Socrates, there have been apologists who have endeavoured to refute them. The former are called sophists, the latter philosophers; though to reverse these titles would seem more just. Sometimes the apologists and sometimes their critics have seemed to have the upper hand. In our own day there is a reaction against the morals of the Victorian Age. These have been analysed, with unexampled clearness, in literary or dramatic productions, such as the *Barretts of Wimpole Street*. This Mr. Barrett (whether or not he resembled the original) was mainly influenced by jealousy when he imposed a stern chastity upon his daughters.¹ He may also

¹ "No dramatic poet", wrote Bernard Shaw, "could ignore the fact that modern psychology has made very short work of the pretension of such jealousy to pure paternal piety; all that can be said to extenuate it now is that its victims were formerly able to disguise its real nature from themselves

have been stirred by envy, for he subjected his own sexual impulses to a rigorous restraint. But he was quite unconscious of his motives and believed himself to be governed by the most impersonal desires.

Moral intolerance is a transitive property. If it belongs to one generation, it is likely to belong to the next. For, as we have seen, those who have suffered from it in their youth are likely to become inhibited and intolerant themselves. But the sons of puritans are not always pure, for sometimes the parental morality has excited a revolt which it has been unable to repress. Nevertheless, the sons of puritans are seldom truly free, for they still feel their inhibitions, even when they fight against them. Thus they may be moral or immoral, but not amoral.

Freud has divided the mind into the super-ego, the ego, and the id. Both the super-ego and the id are unconscious; but whereas the super-ego is composed of early inhibitions, the id contains the impulses which have been repressed. Severe conflict between the two is

by a maniacal self-righteousness nourished by ecstasies of presumptuous and blasphemous prayer."—*Time and Tide*, February 20, 1932.

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unavoidable in people who have been brought up in puritan surroundings (unless they have been psycho-analysed); but whether the result of the conflict is morality or immorality depends upon the side taken by the ego. If the ego has never questioned his traditional beliefs, or has been impressed by the apparent logic of some ethical apologist, he will side with his super-ego and remain moral. If, however, the ego is critically disposed, he will discover that traditional morality has no logical, and but little utilitarian foundation. He will then side with his id and become immoral.

Now immoral people, who are engaged in a perpetual conflict with their super-egos, are neither more happy nor more contented than their moral brethren. But they are more likely to tolerate freedom in others, and, for this reason, less likely to transfer their inhibitions to the younger generation.

We are now in a better position to understand the limits and the possibilities of social therapy. Only psycho-analysis can affect the super-ego and free the ego from internal bondage. But psycho-analysis, although it may help a few individuals, is unlikely to have a direct effect upon society as a whole. The

scope of social therapy, on the other hand, is wider, but it is also less deep. It appeals only to the ego, and affects only conscious beliefs. It may persuade the ego that much of his morality is neither in his own interests nor in the interests of society at large. It may persuade him to take sides against his super-ego, but it cannot free him from its influence. Social therapy, therefore, is unlikely to be of much benefit to the first generation to which it is applied. But it can perhaps induce this generation to be more tolerant than its predecessors, so that its successors will be more likely to be free.

A moral revolution has already begun. Anthropologists like Frazer have robbed morality of its divine sanction; psychologists like Havelock Ellis have shown that it is often contrary to the interests of man; and, lastly, novelists like D. H. Lawrence,¹ have thundered against it to a larger public. As a consequence of all these profound criticisms and spirited attacks, an ever-increasing number of people are deciding to abandon the morals of their fathers, and to do as they please, instead. Unfortunately, the

¹ Joad's charter for Rationalists (*Under the Fifth Rib*) admirably summarizes the programme of the modern moral revolutionary.

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result has not always been as good as might have been supposed. Conventional moralists are not slow to take advantage of the mistakes of their opponents. They have argued, not always without truth, that the lives of the sexually emancipated compare unfavourably in point of happiness with those of the moral slaves they so much despise. And even the impartial reformer cannot help observing, with distress, how much more completely the free and intellectual can mismanage their affairs than those dull souls who submit tamely to convention. In such people the trouble is unconscious. Owing to their early inhibitions, they are either fixated at a pre-genital level and incapable of satisfactory love, or incurably ambivalent to all love objects. In consequence, the apparent freedom, which they have later won, is useless. It merely adds to the number of their disappointments and to the amount of unhappiness they inflict upon others as well as upon themselves.

There are, doubtless, persons whose troubles are not so deep-seated. To these, emancipation from superstition or the superficial conscience, or greater tolerance from public opinion or the law, might be sufficient to bring happi-

ness. But such people are less numerous than they appear. One may pity the woman who marries a drunken husband, and blame the rigour of the law for perpetuating her miserable condition. But, if profiting by the legal relaxations of another country, she marries successively no less than three husbands afflicted with the same inebriety, one begins to doubt whether, after all, the law deserves the blame. In countries where divorce is easy there are many examples of such people, who are either incapable of happiness with anyone, or who select, with an unerring if unconscious judgment, only those companions with whom they are certain to be unhappy.

It is, however, unnecessary to conclude that, because the first fruits of moral criticism have been disappointing, the final results will be still more unfortunate. People cannot be freed from the inhibitions of their childhood by arguments which appeal only to their egos. Therefore, no benefit can be expected from the decay of morals unless the present generation applies to its successors the laxer standards, which it is now unsuccessfully applying to itself. We will try to foresee the probable results if this course is actually

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pursued, in order to discover whether it should be recommended by social therapy, or not.

Mrs. Seligman¹ has pointed out that there is much less deprivation in the first years of a savage infant than in those of a European. During the whole period of lactation, which may last several years, the mother is often taboo to her husband, so that she concentrates the whole of her attention upon her child. The savage, therefore, is spared many of those early frustrations and jealousies which are often so fatal to the normal development of the European. Moreover, primitive parents appear to be more tolerant towards the excretive amusements of their infants than European nurses or mothers.² Therefore it seems probable that a primitive infant is less likely to develop anal and urethral fixations or an ambivalent reaction towards his mother, and to the women who subsequently take her place in his affections.

It is doubtful whether the European mother will ever encourage her husband to adopt a mistress during a lactation of three years, in order that she may concentrate her whole

¹ *British Journal of Psychology*, January, 1930.

² Cf. Malinowski, *The Sexual Life of Savages*.

attention upon her children. Nor is it probable that the European father would agree to this arrangement. Nevertheless, more appreciation and tolerance of the jealousy of infants should lessen their early conflicts, and decrease the intensity of those unconscious parricidal wishes which are the main cause of later depression and discontent. More tolerance for the infant's inherent dirtiness should be still easier to acquire. This would probably decrease the amount of pregenital fixation, and the impaired capacity for love which it involves. The degree of ambivalence towards the mother, and towards subsequent love objects, would also be less.

The savage enjoys greater freedom than the European not only as an infant but also as a child. Before puberty there are few restrictions on his sexual curiosity and play.¹ Thus few impediments are placed in the way of a transference of the erotic impulse from the mother

¹ It is difficult for an anthropologist who is not also a psycho-analyst, to form a true estimate of the unconscious in primitive people. But two such careful observers as Prof. Malinowski and Mrs. Seligman have stated that in them the Oedipus complex is much less conspicuous than it is in Europeans.

Malinowski, *op. cit.*

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to a suitable playmate of the same age, and the probability of Œdipean fixations is correspondingly decreased. The unconscious is less concerned with desiring the mother and hating the father, and the conscious is more capable of satisfactory love elsewhere.

The European parent, however enlightened, may well hesitate before extending a like indulgence to his own children. Complications with more conventional parents and with schoolmasters have to be considered. But the spread of psychological knowledge may in time remove these difficulties. Meanwhile, much may be done by a more open treatment of the subject. The child's questions may be answered truthfully, and he may be brought up in an atmosphere in which neither the body nor its functions are regarded with disgust or shame. Perhaps even this amount of tolerance would be sufficient to prevent many of the later troubles, which so often afflict the products of the sterner system of the past. The sexual instinct of a child, brought up in this way, would be less distorted by pre-genital fixations, less inhibited by conflict with the super-ego, and less firmly attached to an unconscious incestuous ideal. He would therefore be more likely to enjoy,

when he was full grown, an unimpaired capacity for love.

Only at the age of puberty does the savage come into serious conflict with the sexual taboos of his tribe. At this age the consequences of sexual freedom are more serious and even the most tolerant society would have to take some steps to restrict it within limits. Some external prohibitions would probably have to be imposed, as they are at present, though they would doubtless be less severe. The internal prohibitions, however, would be of a wholly different nature. The unconscious super-ego would be less severe. Shame and disgust would be largely absent. And it would be futile to appeal to authoritative codes based only on superstition. As a substitute for these irrational restraints, the real difficulties and dangers of sex would have to be explained. A sense of responsibility for children and regard for the feelings of a sexual partner are natural to those who are capable of love. And such restraining emotions would be early developed if they were adequately described. Moreover, something would have to be taught about contraception and venereal disease.

Adolescents brought up in this way would

soon be in a position to derive more profit than injury from still greater freedom. Like Malinowski's Trobrianders they would perhaps pass unhampered through a period of sexual trial and error before embarking upon the more serious partnerships of marriage. Some unhappiness is inseparable from all human relations, whether permanent or temporary, and the youth of the most scientific Utopia would not escape its share. But this would probably be small compared with the sufferings which the present system usually inflicts. There might be some loss of unrealizable ideals but there would be no blunting of the ability for actual love. Unlike the many adolescents of the present age, whose power to love, already limited by early inhibitions, is still further curtailed by prolonged masturbation or intercourse with prostitutes, their emotional susceptibilities would probably be heightened by their experiences. To prove that this would indeed be so, it is only necessary to compare the young Englishman with the young Frenchman. The Englishman is notoriously a clumsy and inconsiderate lover; whereas the Frenchman, whatever his other faults, has great understanding of, and sympathy for, his mistress or his wife.

It is less easy to foresee the effects of sexual freedom upon girls. For them, mistakes are naturally more serious, even in a contraceptive age. But if they were honestly instructed in the real difficulties of life such mistakes should be no more frequent than they are at present, when ignorance and superstition are considered an adequate protection against the dangers of the world. Possibly, even in the absence of moral prohibitions, many women might still prefer to refrain from any sexual union unless it was likely to be permanent. But others would doubtless undertake their first experiences with a more open mind, ready either to perpetuate them if they were successful, or to try others if they were not.

The members of an emancipated society would probably differ from ourselves in that they would be more promiscuous when they were young, and less promiscuous when they were old. Many of the products of the present system, after a varying period of innocence imposed by their consciences and the opinion of the world, obtain some measure of superficial freedom. But their early inhibitions have made them incapable of satisfactory love. Since they are unaware of this, they blame their

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partners rather than themselves and are always in search of fresh adventures and fresh disappointments. In an emancipated society, however, people would be more capable both of giving satisfaction and of being satisfied themselves. Therefore, after a varying number of experimental unions, they would be more likely than the inhabitants of the present world to find a companion from whom they would no longer wish to part.

In an emancipated society, marriage would be a mutual contract of responsibility for children. Couples would not, as they do now, form an irrevocable union, without much previous knowledge of each other, merely to satisfy their lusts. Instead, they would only acquire a legal status for their partnership, when they already knew each other well and desired children. Such partnerships would be likely to be more satisfying and less often broken than they are at present.

I do not know whether mental or physical infidelity would be more or less common than it is now. But I think that it would at least have less unfortunate results. The degree of freedom which one partner requires and the other is prepared to give varies greatly in

different individuals and in different social systems.¹ In every kind of union there is probably some conflict between the aberrant inclinations of one partner and the jealousy of the other, and perhaps no union is happy unless there is a compromise, in which both sides make some sacrifice, between these two desires. In an inhibited society the difficulty of effecting such a compromise is great. For aberrant inclinations are heightened by neurotic inability to be satisfied by anyone, and jealousy is increased by an unconscious envy and a neurotic fear of deprivation. In an emancipated society both these factors would be less. People would be more capable of satisfaction, and less prone to chase unrealizable ideals. At the same time they would be less jealous because they would be less inhibited and less afraid of deprivation.

The subject of jealousy is worth discussing at greater length, for it is not only important in the domestic circle but also in the wider family of the state. At the one extreme, is the jealousy of the Mohammedan who keeps his

¹ At the one extreme is complete sexual freedom, at the other; restriction on purely platonic friendships outside marriage.

wife behind bars and shutters, or of the Frenchwoman who prevents her husband dining at his club; at the other, is the Thibetan who shares his wife quite freely, or the negress who is delighted when there is a new addition to the harem. To us, jealousy may seem a normal expression of emotion, but to our descendants it may quite possibly be regarded as pathological. Already Ernest Jones has argued that jealousy characterizes the love of the child, or of the neurotic who has remained childish in his emotions, rather than that of the healthy adult. For, whereas the child desires to be loved as a protection against his manifold anxieties, the adult should have largely outgrown his fear of loneliness, so that he can desire the happiness of the loved object, more than its exclusive possession.

In order to discover the secret of such altruism, it is necessary to consider the development of those rare individuals whose Oedipus complexes pass by without leaving a lasting jealousy behind. At first the child regards his parents only in relation to himself and, for a long time, refuses to believe that they are also related to each other. Sooner or later, however, he discovers that he is not the sole object

of their love. This is perhaps the most painful discovery of his life. But, in rare cases, he can resign himself to it without lasting bitterness by identifying himself with them and thus enjoying their mutual love vicariously.¹ The exact conditions, which facilitate such a happy solution of the Œdipus complex, are hard to define. But it is fairly safe to say that every unnecessary frustration makes it more difficult for the child to renounce his exorbitant demands, and to learn to share rather than to monopolize the objects of his love. In an emancipated society this should be easier for children; and, since the reactions of childhood determine those of later life, it should also be easier for adults. Therefore the members of an emancipated society should be less jealous, not only because they would suffer less from unconscious envy and unconscious fear of deprivation, but also because they would have a greater capacity for identification and for disinterested love.

Altruistic love may seem a poor equipment for a hard and unsympathetic world. Nevertheless, it has certain hedonic compensations

¹ Naomi Royde-Smith, in her book *The Mother*, has described this process with great clearness.

for the individual and utilitarian advantages for the state. In the first place, it is an added source of pleasure. For whereas the jealous egoist can only enjoy his own love experiences, the unjealous altruist vicariously enjoys those of other people also. In the second place, altruistic love is a source of strength in trouble. For without the capacity for personal renunciation which it gives, the real and unavoidable deprivations of life might be intolerable and could be met, as they are usually at present, only by suicide or delusion. Indeed, for the rationalist, who is unable to cheat reason into the belief that there will be reconciliations and reunions beyond the grave, it is perhaps the only alternative to suicide.¹ And with the decay of faith, rationalists are becoming common.

The same decay of religious belief is making altruism more necessary to the state as well as to the individual. Formerly, religious conscience was a powerful ally to the law, in its defence of the citizens against each other. But people are discovering that the taboos of the religious conscience have no rational foundation and, if they remain egoistic and anti-social, unaided law may be no longer able to restrain

¹ There remains, of course, the alternative of alcohol.

them. Therefore it is becoming increasingly desirable that people should be more altruistic and so need fewer internal prohibitions.

Altruistic love is, of course, no new idea. It is the core of Christianity. But it has been much distorted by the ethics and theology of innumerable priests. Even from the time of St. Paul the idea of love was much soiled by the murky waters of asceticism. And the idea of altruistic love was entirely lost when the statement that we must lose the world in order to gain our souls was reinterpreted in terms of immortality and divine reward. But perhaps the official guardians of Christian philosophy may yet lose their asceticism and metaphysics. If so, they will become again a powerful and a progressive force. Meanwhile, however, an increased capacity for altruistic and non-jealous love is more likely to spring from the activities of science than from those of religion.

The Social Consequences of Tolerance

Perhaps it is over optimistic to expect the millennium from a moral revolution, however thorough this may be. Tolerance for the perversity of infants, the precocity of children, and the promiscuity of adolescents, might not alone

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be sufficient to inaugurate an era of universal and altruistic love. But we may predict, with greater certainty, some more modest gains.

It should be clear, even without the aid of psycho-analysis, that the sexual lives of individuals would be more satisfying than they are at present, and that there would therefore be less immediate cause for unhappiness and discontent. But the less obvious consequences should be still more important. If the main argument of this essay is correct, there would be less Œdipus complex. For, since the sexual instincts of individuals would find more satisfying outlets, there would be less fixation at, and regression to, the unfulfilled desires of infancy and childhood.

Now we have seen that one of the consequences of the Œdipus complex is an inverted hate. In the age of faith, this hate was usually attributed to the wrath of God, so that religious people imagined that they had committed mortal sin, and lived in perpetual terror of punishments to come. The decline of faith, however, has done nothing to diminish the misery of such conditions. For, if they can no longer be experienced as guilt, they are converted into a perhaps still more painful sense

of unescapable depression. Although extreme cases of such melancholy are comparatively rare, we have seen that, in milder forms, they are almost universal. Thus, the inhabitants of Western Europe engage feverishly in work or active play in order to escape the depression which, for them, is inseparable from leisure. If, therefore, this depression is an effect of the Œdipus complex, a decline in sexual morality should decrease it. Incidentally, an increase in natural happiness would produce far-reaching changes in the activities of European man. He would demand less those amusements and commodities which at present serve only to separate him from his own society, and much economic effort would be released for more useful ends.

We have also argued that the Œdipus complex is to blame for social unrest. In the first place, it is a direct cause of economic envy. Excessive desire for the material products of the world is due to pre-genital fixations and regressions which would not occur without the assistance of this complex. And excessive envy of those who have power or material possessions results from the survival of unconscious hate towards the father or the

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brothers who were once rivals for the attention of the mother. Therefore, if sexual morality indeed aggravates the Œdipus complex, greater sexual tolerance should not fail to decrease that part of social unrest which is due to economic envy rather than to real want.

Lastly, we have argued that the Œdipus complex is indirectly responsible for a more rational form of social unrest. To it are due many of those prejudices that combine to retard material progress, and so facilitate the continuance of poverty in an age which enjoys the technical capacity to remove all reasonable needs. Therefore, greater sexual tolerance should not only add to the direct happiness and stability of society but also do much, indirectly, to increase its material comfort.

Little imagination is required to realize how quickly the poverty of the world would disappear if the problems of economics were not obscured by the paranoiac animosities of nations or of classes, and if eugenic birth control were unhampered by puritan intolerance. Questions of international indebtedness, of tariffs, and of wage rates, would be settled on their merits, and not in accordance with the unreason of passionate disputants. In this

way the periodic trade depressions which now afflict the world would be prevented.

We may consider, rather more fully, the effects of a rational attitude to eugenic birth control. When the cost of unskilled labour rises, there is a tendency for machines to take its place. If the increased cost is due solely to trade union regulations, the position of labour, as a whole, deteriorates rather than improves, for the machines cause unemployment, and the unemployed are a dead weight upon the economic activities of their fellows. If, however, unskilled labour became expensive because it became scarce, it could be dispensed with to the benefit of all. For this reason I believe that material civilization would rapidly advance if eugenic birth control were generally adopted.

Few mothers deliberately desire the size of their families to be excessive, so that a little open propaganda would soon extend the practice of contraception to all sane members of the nation. The fertility of those who are congenitally incapable of profiting by this knowledge would have to be curtailed more drastically. For these, sterilization is the obvious cure. By such means the quantity of the population could be limited and its quality

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prevented from declining. In order to effect a positive improvement in the stock it would be further necessary to encourage the fecundity of selected individuals by moral persuasion and pecuniary reward.

If these measures were adopted, material progress would probably be rapid. The supply of low-grade labour would decrease and its place would tend to be filled by machines.¹ At the same time, there would be a greater demand for skilled workers, and their wages would consequently increase. While that section of the proletariat which is incapable of higher education would tend to die out, the more intelligent portion would rise into a higher class. The drudgery of labour would tend to disappear and, with it, class distinctions, for these are due to sharp educational differences rather than to differences of wealth. The educated classes would not be reduced to the level of the proletariat. The survivors of the proletariat would be raised to the status of the educated classes.

In the home, domestic drudgery would be performed neither by wives nor servants, but

¹ The importation of cheap foreign labour would have to be prohibited.

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by machines. Cooking and heating would be electric, and the necessary dusting would be reduced to a minimum by the simplicity of furniture design. Public nurseries would enable mothers to absent themselves from their offspring as often as they chose. Moreover, there would be no necessity for the home of the future to be near the place of work or recreation of its owner. Aeroplanes, capable of landing or taking off in small places, would be as common as motor-bicycles to-day. Some might regret the picturesqueness of the insanitary cottage or the retinue of the over-decorated mansion. But the necessary conditions of culture—leisure and mobility—would be accessible to all. And this culture would be enjoyed by a tolerant, a happy, and a stable people.

It would perhaps be most agreeable to take leave of our imaginary descendants at this point and to return to earth with an unsullied picture of their bliss. The honesty of a scientific conscience,¹ however, compels us to examine the last faint traces of our own mis-giving. We have argued that, with the

¹ What is called the scientific conscience is sometimes akin to *Schadenfreude*.

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decrease of unconscious hate, the anti-social forces of disruption would be robbed of their hidden power. But what of the energy for sublimations? For this too springs from the same source. Would the divine discontent, which is the secret motive of all art and science, also be destroyed? Would the denizens of our Utopia, like the indolent and happy savages of some South Sea Island, fritter away their time in the endless enjoyment of each other's love? To us, who have an almost morbid craving for immortality (for our race, if no longer for ourselves) the decision is momentous. We can comfort ourselves by remembering that sublimation, as we know it now, suffers more from the presence of inhibition, than from its absence. Therefore our descendants can go a long way on the road of greater tolerance before they endanger the values which their ancestors most cherish. Perhaps an adequate supply of energy for art and science will always be diverted from the fundamental instincts by the deprivations which Nature inflicts on man.¹ If so, the aid of

¹ Prof. Flugel suggests that man will always have nature to hate and strive to conquer and that, for this reason, he may be able to dispense with other father symbols.

morality would remain a superfluous addition to her work. But this is a question which only the future can decide.

Destiny and the Desires of Man

Although human destiny may be governed by laws as rigorous as those which determine the courses of the stars, this destiny is not independent of the desires of man. Indeed, a world in which the future was uninfluenced by human wishes would be a fatalistic, rather than a determined, world.

But although the future is influenced by desires, it seldom corresponds with them, unless they are supported by knowledge. Before physical science, nature seemed spiteful or indifferent because man was ignorant of her ways; but since the time of Galileo she has become progressively subservient to his wishes, because he has been learning to understand her. Only in the last few years, however, have we begun to understand ourselves. For this reason, sociology is still almost in the pre-scientific age in which social evolution fails to correspond with human wishes. But, if we may expect that psychology will advance as rapidly as physics, we may hope soon to

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control our social future also, and to mould it according to our whims.

In this book we have tried to discover the conditions of social stability and happiness. Our conclusions are tentative and may be faulty, but further research will soon confirm them or correct their errors. Then, if society still desires stability and happiness, these ideals will be certainly attained. So far, we have assumed these ideals without discussion, and have merely considered how they can be realized. The question of the value of the ideals themselves used to belong solely to the domain of ethics. But ethical discussion is apt to degenerate, in the last analysis, into statements of personal predilection. The question of the rationality of ideals, however, still remains, and it belongs to psychology rather than to ethics. We may, therefore, end this essay with a brief consideration of this more vital problem.

An ideal, or indeed any desire, may be described as rational if it would survive a complete knowledge of its unconscious motives. We have, therefore, to consider whether or not the Utopian ideal would survive a complete analysis of itself.

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The Utopian ideal is ancient and has appeared in many forms. The Greeks and Romans looked back to a Golden Age in the past when men were kind and happy. The Christians, likewise, believed in a Paradise before the Fall, but they also hoped for a Heaven beyond the grave, where a perfect bliss would obliterate the memory of all earthly sorrows. Similar ideals occur in the mythology of almost every people. Such dreams, indeed, appear to fulfil one of the most fundamental needs of man, for they survived the decline of superstition. They were resuscitated, in a more material garb, by evolutionary philosophers, and thus did much to form the complacent optimism of the Victorian Age.

Meanwhile, psycho-analysis has thrown some light on the unconscious motives which have led men to seek so passionately for a golden age, either in this world or in the world beyond the grave. The infant at the breast, and still more the foetus in the womb, knows neither necessity nor fear, for all his needs are stilled as soon as they arise. Before long, however, he is disturbed from this state of bliss. He experiences frustration and he learns to hate.

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We have seen how this hate conflicts with love; how it may remain to sully all subsequent relations; and how it may invert against the self and so give rise to further inhibitions and to a lasting sense of anxiety or guilt. Anyone, in whom such conflict is severe, cannot fail to see the world as an evil and a distressing place. He will therefore tend to return in unconscious fantasy to the pre-Œdipean paradise of early infancy, when there was no frustration and no hate. This is the unconscious source of the Golden Age, which the Greeks regretted, the Christians hoped for, and the Utopians endeavour to create.

Completely healthy people can perhaps tolerate their world without passionately desiring to improve it. If so, only those who have unresolved conflicts of their own are liable to indulge seriously in Utopian aspirations. But until the world becomes Utopian, completely healthy people will continue to be rare. And, for this reason, idealism will only become extinct when its object is achie

